

Wyoming Game and Fish Department Strategic Plan FY12-FY16



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MISSION

The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission is created and empowered in Title 23 of the Wyoming Statutes. The Department is created and placed under the direction and supervision of the Commission in W.S. 23-1-401. The responsibilities of the Commission and the Department are defined in W.S. 23-1-103. In these and associated statutes, we are charged with providing...”an adequate and flexible system for the control, propagation, management, protection and regulation of all Wyoming wildlife.” The Department is the only entity of state government directly charged with managing Wyoming’s wildlife resources and conserving them for future generations. As such, our mission is:

“CONSERVING WILDLIFE —SERVING PEOPLE.”

AGENCY PHILOSOPHY

Wildlife management is the statutory responsibility of the Department, under the direction of the Commission. Successful wildlife management depends on good habitat. Indeed, wildlife and their habitats are inseparable. Diverse populations of wild, free-ranging terrestrial and aquatic wildlife are indicators of the health of Wyoming's land and water. Through the efforts of dedicated professionals and concerned citizens, Wyoming's wildlife will be managed on balance with its habitat and the desires of the people.

Effective wildlife management and good resource stewardship require people working together and understanding all aspects of the wildlife resource. The reward for employees is knowing that, through their efforts, wildlife will continue to thrive to be enjoyed by further generations. To guarantee mission fulfillment, well-informed leaders must make sound management decisions based on information from employees working directly with the resource and the public.

The success and quality of Wyoming's wildlife management will be judged by the people the agency serves. Landowners, hunters, anglers and a host of others make up the Department's complex constituency. Without their cooperation, wildlife conservation in Wyoming would be impossible. Open communication and feedback builds confidence in our technical ability to define and manage wildlife resources. Frequent public contact is necessary to assure understanding and involvement.

The Commission and Department have been entrusted to balance the desires of the resource user with the needs of wildlife and habitat conservation. Quality information about resource use and effective regulations aid in this balance.

In publicly funded management, wise use of public funds is expected. We must continue to be fiscally responsible and invite periodic review from those who provide funding. Fiscal accountability, plus successful wildlife management, builds confidence in the agency.

AGENCY VISION

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is dedicated to the conservation of sustainable, functional ecosystems capable of supporting wildlife populations at least as healthy, abundant and diverse as they were at the dawn of the 21st century. We will inventory and monitor all wildlife and enhance populations of species at risk. Our highest priority will be free-ranging populations of native species in natural habitat, recognizing that use of non-native wildlife and intensive management such as feeding and maintenance stocking of some species will be necessary to address habitat deficiencies and local demands for wildlife-related recreation. We will take a holistic approach to habitat management, integrating various land uses in a complementary way, while involving the general public, private landowners and land management agencies. We will provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, trapping, viewing and other uses of wildlife.

We will recruit, develop and retain a nationally recognized workforce of empowered, dedicated, professional employees. We will encourage creativity, innovation and risk-taking. We will maintain a first-class working environment, with equitable pay, training and administrative support. Our modern, efficient and well-maintained facilities will meet all applicable workspace and safety standards. Our lands will be managed to emphasize and maintain the wildlife habitat and public access values for which they were obtained. Our equipment and vehicles will be well maintained, safe, and sufficient to meet our needs.

We are the stewards of Wyoming's wildlife resources. We depend on the involvement of citizens who support wildlife. These citizen conservationists are informed, educated and committed to a sound natural resource policy. They understand and value their conservation heritage, natural resource base, and scientific wildlife management. They possess and demonstrate a strong conservation ethic and are actively involved in a variety of programs. We encourage participation by all wildlife enthusiasts, including minorities, women, children and the physically challenged. We will conduct business openly and honestly. We will be responsible and accountable with the financial resources provided by our constituents. We will strive to understand and respond to changing public needs. We will not seek to be everything to everyone; however, we will demonstrate excellence in the things we do.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

SITUATION ANALYSIS

I. OVERVIEW OF AGENCY SCOPE AND FUNCTIONS

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department was created and placed under the supervision and direction of the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission in Title 23, Wyoming Statutes, but its history actually extends to the early days of Wyoming statehood. The position of State Fish Warden was created in 1890, and that of State Game Warden in 1899. Both offices reflected interest in the conservation of natural resources as a result of the ruthless exploitation of the late 1800's. Unlimited harvest had left Wyoming's wildlife resources vastly depleted from pre-settlement levels. With protection from over-harvest and the establishment of some protected areas of habitat, wildlife populations began to slowly increase in the early part of the twentieth century.

With growing wildlife populations, and the resultant need for closer and more frequent contact with constituents, the Commission was established in 1921. This bipartisan board of lay persons was formed to provide effective citizen oversight of the Game and Fish Department.

In subsequent years, the Commission and Department continued their role as protector of wildlife from illegal exploitation. Efforts were primarily directed at species of high interest to hunters and anglers. As the science of wildlife management evolved, so did the professional role of the Department. Federal legislation assisted, with the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act in 1939 (Pittman-Robertson) and Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act in 1952 (Dingell-Johnson), providing much needed funding.

By the 1970s, the science of wildlife management had grown to embrace the importance of non-hunted wildlife and the importance of habitat to all wildlife. With passage of federal and state laws and regulations requiring the Department's involvement in various environmental issues and the energy boom of the '70s, the agency took on a larger role in habitat and land use issues related to wildlife conservation. In recent years, the Department has maintained its traditional role of providing premier hunting and fishing while developing additional opportunities for all people interested in Wyoming's wildlife and conserving habitat in the state.

Today, the Department's constituents are a diverse group of Wyoming residents and non-residents who have an interest in, or are affected by, wildlife. We continue to manage all wildlife for public benefits and, in cooperation with private landowners and land management agencies, to advocate habitat conservation to provide a wildlife legacy for the future. To our constituents, we are the state agency responsible for managing all the state's wildlife, excluding predatory animals and predacious birds, and conserving their habitat; controlling hunting and fishing; enforcing applicable laws; serving as an advocate for wildlife, wildlife habitat and all wildlife users; and expanding opportunities for the public to enjoy wildlife.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS

The following material summarizes pertinent information regarding the organizational aspects of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department as of April 1, 2011.

SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF WORK FORCE

The Department is currently made up of 404 permanent employees. In addition, the Department's temporary and contract workforce varies seasonally from approximately 50 to 150 employees.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND PROCESS

The Department is currently made up of four divisions and the Office of the Director. These divisions are: Fiscal, Fish, Services, and Wildlife. The Department's management style is based on a comprehensive management system, using the principles of management by objective, program budgeting, program evaluation, and program adaptation. The Department has utilized strategic planning since 1975, and has incorporated the concepts of program budgeting and Federal Assistance Compensation planning. Department operations are governed by a centralized chain-of-command with major changes or decisions subject to approval by the Staff (consisting of the Director, Deputy Directors, Division Chiefs, and Assistant Division Chiefs) and/or the Commission. With the adoption of the principles of Adaptive Management, there has been increased focus on teams and employee empowerment in problem-solving and decision-making.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The Department's main office is in Cheyenne, but personnel are stationed in each of Wyoming's counties. Regional field offices are located in Casper, Cody, Green River, Jackson, Lander, Laramie, Pinedale, and Sheridan. In addition, personnel are located at 11 fish culture units, 2 bird farms, 50 warden stations, the Thorne/Williams Research Unit at Sybille, and the University of Wyoming. Our constituents are located throughout Wyoming and outside the state, nationally and internationally.

HUMAN RESOURCES

One of the Department's foremost strengths is its employees, with a well educated and dedicated work force. The Department faces challenges in the near future as the need for a more flexible work force meets the traditional pattern of career-long employment with the agency. Historically, the Department has enjoyed low rates of employee turnover. Over the past 10 years, from 2000 through 2009, employee turnover (due to death, voluntary terminations, involuntary terminations, retirements, or transfer to another agency) averaged 6.1 percent of permanent employees. The statewide average percent turnover for the same years was 13.2 percent. The Human Resources Division of the Department of Administration and Information indicates personnel turnover due to retirement is poised to increase. Currently, approximately 20 percent of the agency's workforce is eligible to retire; by 2014, that figure is expected to approach 30 percent.

Unfortunately, Wyoming is not alone in facing this looming crisis. Other state wildlife agencies and Federal resource agencies are expecting similar rates of turnover. Recruiting and retaining employees is expected to become more difficult. Recruitment will be a challenge as increased retirements are a trend nationwide and we will be competing nationally for employees. Pay rates are expected to be a major factor in the Department's ability to compete in attracting and retaining qualified personnel.

In order to address this issue, the Department created a Workforce Plan Report. This report identified the challenges facing the Department as well as creating short-term and long-term strategies for dispersing institutional knowledge and developing employees to move in to leadership roles. Beginning in the summer of 2007, the Department initiated an internal Leadership Development Program. This program was intended to provide training in interpersonal leadership development focusing on communication, relationship building, teamwork, and mentoring. The initial class of participants was made up of 21 employees, representing three of the Department's five divisions. Subsequent classes have represented all five of the Department divisions, with a total of 84 employees having completed the Level 1 training. In 2009 a second level of training was initiated. Leadership Development II is designed to focus on development in technical competencies as well as leadership competencies. The second cohort of Leadership Development II participants is currently completing training, making a total of 37 employees who have completed that level of the program. The Leadership Development Program has received very positive feedback from participating employees and continues to be supported by Department Administration and the Commission.

CAPITAL ASSETS

In addition to offices, fish culture units, warden stations, and other facilities, the Department controls property rights on a variety of lands. Department lands throughout the state have been acquired and managed primarily for big game winter range, waterfowl production and access to hunting and fishing opportunities. The Department manages 36 Wildlife Habitat Management Areas (approximately 410,692 acres) and 104 Public Access Areas in the state, which provide high quality public access for hunting and fishing. Some Wildlife Habitat Management Areas include state lands (Office of State Lands & Investments) and/or federal land, and those areas are managed pursuant to cooperative agreements between Department and those other agencies. These habitat and access areas encompass 372 miles of streams, 47,730 acres of lake, 415 parking areas, 1163 miles of road, 66 boat ramps, 23 boat docks and 1935 acres of riparian and wetland habitat. While most of the Commission's habitat and access areas are open year round, some have winter closures to minimize disturbance to big game. These capital assets represent strengths for the Department, and overall our constituents are supportive of the Department's role in acquiring and maintaining these lands.

In 2008, the Department began the project to construct an addition to the Cheyenne Headquarters building and renovate much of the existing structure. The \$14.5 million project is scheduled for completion by the middle of 2011. The new addition will provide much needed storage, office, and meeting space as well as a new public entrance and support center, license sales area, gift store, and interpretive displays. Department functions and employees in Cheyenne have been split between two locations while remodeling of the headquarters building takes place. During construction, services to the public on matters such as license purchases, boat registrations, hunter safety and hunter information have been conducted at the temporary location in south Cheyenne. Funding for this important project was provided by Governor Freudenthal and the Wyoming Legislature.

KEY ORGANIZATIONAL EVENTS AND AREAS OF CHANGE

1869

- The Wyoming Territorial Legislature passes the first “act for the protection of game and fish in the Territory of Wyoming.”

1872

- First National Park created – Yellowstone National Park.

1878

- Otto Gramm named first Wyoming Territorial Fish Commissioner.

1882

- Board of Fish Commission is established.

1899

- The Wyoming State Legislature creates the Office of State Game Warden.

1912

- First acquisition of land (2,000 acres) by Federal Government for National Elk Refuge.

1921

- The first Game and Fish Commission is created.

1923

- Wyoming conducts its first systematic census of game animals.

1925

- The Game and Fish Commission is further defined to provide for a six-person bipartisan citizen-based body.

1929

- The Game and Fish Commission is given authority to open and close hunting seasons as needed.

1936

- *Wyoming Wildlife* magazine is published.

1937

- The Pittman-Robertson Act is created by Congress, establishing a special tax on sporting arms and ammunition to fund terrestrial wildlife restoration projects.

1937

- Game and Fish Commission is given authority over wildlife management with user fee funded budget.

1950

- The Dingell-Johnson Act establishes tax on fishing equipment for fisheries management and conservation.

1950s

- The state’s first wild turkeys are released.

1953

- Commission expanded to seven members.

1973

- The Federal Endangered Species Act is created.

1975

- The Department initiates strategic planning.

- 1980
- A major license fee increase is approved by the Wyoming Legislature.
- 1981
- Black-footed ferrets, thought to be extinct, are discovered near Meeteetse, Wyoming.
- 1983
- A Legislative Service Office sunset review of Department budget and programs justifies continuation of the agency with minor changes.
- 1984
- Wallop-Breaux amendment passes, providing additional funds for sport fish restoration.
- 1986
- Task Force 2000, an internal team, makes recommendations on strategic direction for the agency in the 1990's.
- 1987
- The Governor's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Wildlife makes recommendations for improving management and responsiveness to constituents.
- 1988
- Wildlife Management Institute audit of Department organization, programs and procedures makes recommendations on Department structure, etc.
 - The fisheries allocation process is initiated as a means of improving public involvement in program direction.
- 1991
- A license fee increase is approved by the Wyoming Legislature at a significantly lower level than recommended by the Department.
 - Internal task forces make recommendations for improving the licensing system and personnel matters.
 - *Wyoming Wildlife News* is published.
- 1993
- "Wyoming's Wildlife 2010" involves internal and external constituents in developing strategic direction for the Department.
- 1994
- Total Quality Management initiated in Department, "Wyoming's Wildlife 2010" Phase I Report recommends ways to make the Department more effective and save money.
- 1995
- Department begins Phase II of "Wyoming's Wildlife 2010" process and implementation of recommendations related to funding, program prioritization, structure and overall operations.
 - New license draw system initiated in response to license task force recommendations and preference point requirements.
- 1996
- License fee increase approved by the Wyoming Legislature, with provisions for its "sunset" in 1999.
- 1998
- Department expands FY 98 budget in response to license fee increase, addressing in part constituent priorities. Department operations examined by the Wildlife Management

Institute, the Abrahams Group and Arthur Andersen, Inc. Each examination yielded a favorable review.

1999

- License fee “sunset” removed by legislature.

2000

- Conservation Stamp and License fees adjusted by the Wyoming Legislature.
- *AccessYes* program initiated.

2001

- *Wyoming Wildlife Heritage Foundation* created.
- Trial phase of the Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) program completed.

2002

- Wildlife Heritage Foundation of Wyoming achieves its first \$100,000 in assets.

2003

- Hunting and fishing license fees increased by 20 percent to offset the effects of inflation.

2004

- The Legislature provides \$4 million for capital construction.

2005

- Department initiates a process to update its Strategic Plan.
- Wyoming Legislature approves general fund appropriation for Department sage-grouse conservation, fish hatchery restoration and the Veterinary Services Section.
- Wyoming’s “Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy” (now referred to as the State Wildlife Action Plan) is developed.

2006

- Department receives \$19.7 million from legislature to pay for capital construction as well as new programs and expanded efforts related to wildlife diseases and the local sage-grouse working groups.
- The Wildlife Heritage Foundation of Wyoming raises its first million dollars in assets.

2007

- The Legislature approves a significant license fee increase.
- Department’s Leadership Development program is initiated.
- Wyoming Game and Fish Commission formally adopts the new wolf management plan for Wyoming.
- Grizzly bears in Wyoming no longer listed under the Endangered Species Act, and management becomes the responsibility of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

2008

- Wyoming Legislature approves general fund appropriation for the Department’s nongame and sensitive species management program.
- Hunter Mentor Program passed by Wyoming Legislature
- Gray Wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains were officially removed from the federal Endangered Species List and transitioned from federal to state management on March 28.
- Wyoming Legislature approves \$2.4 million for wolf management.
- On July 18, a federal judge issued an injunction to suspend the removal of wolves in the northern Rocky Mountains from the federal Endangered Species List.

2009

- Delisting of grizzly bears overturned by federal court action.

- Wyoming Legislature enables the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission to approve a regulation to control the collection of shed antlers and horns of big game animals on public land west of the Continental Divide.

III. FISCAL ASPECTS

BUDGET HISTORY

Beginning in FY 94, the Department focused on reducing budgets to narrow the gap between agency revenue and expenditures (see below). From FY 95 to FY 99, the Department's budgets were significantly less than during the previous four year period. It was not until FY 01, seven years after cost reduction programs were put into place, that Department budgets expanded to the level of the early 1990's, which meant that during that seven year period, Department budgets were not able to keep up with inflation.

The Department has been successful in recent years, 2000 forward, in obtaining periodic (every 4-5 years) inflationary license increases, which while not allowing for Department expansion, have meant that the Department has not been faced with additional cuts. In 2004, the Department, for the first time in over 50 years, received legislative funding for several capital improvements at hatcheries. In the following legislative session, 2005, the Department received general funds to expand its vet services program, primarily to address brucellosis issues, and its sage-grouse program, to form local working groups. General funds have continued to date for these programs. For the 2009-2010 biennium the Department's general funds were expanded to allow for two additional programs, wolf management and the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS), now known as the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), in addition to previously funded programs, vet services and sage-grouse. However, in the 2009 Legislative session, funding for the wolf management program was reduced by approximately 50 percent as wolf management in Wyoming was returned to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), with the Department's role modified to damage investigation and payment of damage claims only. In May 2009, at the request of the Governor's office, the Department, along with all other state agencies, was required to submit cost reduction plans to allow for a five percent general budget reduction for the 2009-2010 biennium. This five percent reduction was also required for the 2011-2012 biennium budget. In the 2010 Legislative session, the Department prepared and had approved a \$7.3 million general fund biennial budget for the four existing general fund programs. This appropriation represented an approximate 20 percent reduction from the legislatively approved budget for the previous biennium due both to the elimination of funding for several one-time projects in addition to the Governor's directive of an overall five percent cut. Additionally, the Department submitted an \$890,000 capital construction budget, which included projects involving cold storage units at several regional office sites, a modular unit at the Cody regional office, remodeling work at the Lander regional office and several comfort stations. These projects were all approved and funded. During the 2011 Legislative Session, the Department received funding for four additional capital construction projects totaling \$932,000. These included a water disinfection system at the Wigwam Rearing station; elk fence replacements; 5 additional ADA comfort stations and public access development at one Commission access area.

During its 2010 session, the Wyoming Legislature appropriated \$1.5 million to the Department to implement new programs aimed at preventing introduction of invasive quagga and zebra mussels. The one year general fund appropriation required the Department to report back on both the accomplishments and cost of the program to the Travel, Recreation, Wildlife, and Cultural Resources Committee and the Joint Appropriations Committee of the legislature in the fall of 2010. Following the 2010 session, the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission passed regulations enabling the Department to take actions to deal with the threat. The regulation gave the Commission authority to deal with the matter and also issue an Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) decal required of all watercraft using Wyoming waters.

To implement this program, one AIS Program Coordinator, one Program Assistant, and 30 seasonal technicians (29 legislatively funded and 1 funded by U.S. Forest Service) were hired. Seasonal inspectors, assisted by other permanent Department personnel and volunteers, conducted watercraft inspections at 36 waters throughout Wyoming. A total of 42,127 inspections were conducted through September 30. Of those, 23 watercraft required decontamination to eliminate the risk of AIS being transported into Wyoming. Public acceptance of the watercraft inspection program was generally positive and boater compliance high, with many boaters following Clean, Drain, and Dry protocols for watercraft entering Wyoming waters. While this level of effort was needed to build program credibility, intercept high risk watercraft and ensure public acceptance of the Clean, Drain, and Dry practices, it is not a commitment that can be sustained by current fisheries management crew personnel that have always had and continue to have primary responsibilities for fisheries management, not AIS.

A request was submitted to fund the second year of the Aquatic Invasive Species Program, which was approved at \$1.06 million, which will allow the Department to continue this program for the 2011 field season. However, funding was less than originally requested. The 2012 Supplemental Appropriation did not include personnel necessary to run an AIS program comparable to the effort put forth in 2010. The supplemental budget currently provides for 29 AWEC employees, one less than authorized in the original 2011 Appropriation and ten less than needed to run an AIS program and protect state waters at a level comparable to 2010. The Department has requested temporary transfer of ten AWEC positions for seasonal work as Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) crews at reservoirs statewide. The requested AWEC positions would be used to hire one crew leader and nine AWEC inspectors. These seasonal employees will provide for the implementation of control, inspection, decontamination, impoundment and quarantine of boats, in addition to public information, temporary permit issuance and other necessary duties to carry out the aquatic invasive species program.

This request will allow fisheries management, funded from Wyoming Game and Fish dollars, not general funds, to train AIS personnel for about four weeks and work check stations with them through the Memorial Day weekend and then return to their fisheries duties by June 1. The transfer of temporary positions will allow inspections at the state's 23 at most risk waters to continue in a manner consistent with last year. Otherwise Department inspection stations would have to be reduced from 23 waters to 16 waters. This reduction in program capacity and effectiveness has the potential to erode the credibility established in 2010 with the boating public and the citizens of Wyoming. Their acceptance and adherence to the program is critical to prevent the spread of invasive mussels and other AIS into Wyoming waters.

WGFD will sample for larval and adult invasive mussels on up to 56 waters throughout the state. Results in 2010 indicated no presence of mussels in 44 at risk waters. Future AIS monitoring will involve an increased number of waters.

Shown below are the Department's historic budgets, excluding legislative capital construction funds, which are administered by another state agency and general funds.

APPROVED COMMISSION		
YEAR	BUDGET (a)	REVENUE RECEIVED
1992	\$41.6 million	\$36.6 million
1993	\$39.8 million	\$32.5 million
1994	\$40.9 million	\$34.3 million
1995	\$35.8 million	\$30.5 million
1996	\$34.6 million	\$32.8 million
1997	\$33.5 million	\$30.7 million
1998	\$38.1 million	\$33.5 million
1999	\$38.5 million	\$33.4 million
2000	\$40.3 million	\$36.2 million
2001	\$40.4 million	\$38.2 million
2002	\$45.2 million	\$38.9 million
2003	\$47.0 million	\$38.4 million
2004	\$42.6 million	\$41.5 million
2005	\$44.2 million	\$44.1 million
2006	\$47.4 million	\$47.6 million
2007	\$50.2 million	\$50.2 million
2008	\$57.0million	\$56.9 million
2009	\$60.9 million	\$59.4 million
2010	\$68.5 million	\$63.8 million
2011	\$69.4 million	\$64.2 million (estimated)
2012	\$71.5 million (proposed)	\$62.00 million (estimated)

(a) The Department commonly reverts between 7 percent and 8 percent of its budget annually.

In 1994, the Commission authorized an internal department study of all agency operations in response to declining revenue and operating cash, which resulted from reduced deer/antelope populations. Following this department-wide review, utilizing self-directed work teams, FY 95 and FY 96 budgets were reduced by 14 percent to 17 percent respectively from FY 92 levels of \$41.6 million with the intent that programs important to the Department's constituents continue wherever possible. During the same period, expenditures also continued a downward trend from \$36.1 million in FY 92 to a five-year Department low of \$31 million in FY 96, with FY 97 expenditures only slightly higher at \$31.9 million. However, in FY 98, expenditures increased to \$33.5 million, with the majority of additional dollars going to aquatic and terrestrial wildlife management objectives. Expenditures have increased since FY 98, with the Department expecting to spend \$62.72 million in FY 11 in Commission funds and between and \$3 and \$3.5 million in general funds. This increase is partially the result of inflation but additionally, the

Department has expanded several programs, such as vet services, sage grouse, nongame/sensitive species, access, and habitat in addition to in the last two years adding wolf management and Aquatic Invasive Species. Much of the increase in funding several of these programs has come from competitive grant funds, with the Department anticipating over \$7 million from this funding source in FY 11.

FUNDING SOURCES (based on FY 11)

The Department receives funding from a limited number of sources such as:

License revenue*.....	59 percent (21 percent resident; 79 percent non-resident)
Federal Aid**.....	20 percent (federal excise tax on hunting/fishing equipment)
Operating Interest.....	2 percent
Trust Interest***.....	1 percent
General funds.....	6 percent
Competitive Grants.....	10 percent
Other.....	2 percent (publications, boat registration, access donations)****

** License revenue includes all revenue from licenses, stamps, permits, tags, license application fees, and more recently preference points, which are now approximately 6 percent of the Department's revenue stream.*

*** Approximately \$13 million is received annually from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (W.S.-23-1-601 and 602) as the state's apportionment of excise taxes on hunting/fishing equipment. This funding is used to defray agency maintenance and operation costs that are expended on activities approved as eligible for federal reimbursement under the Department's comprehensive plan and in accordance with Federal Aid requirements (50CFR). Currently, the Sport Fish portion of funding is approximately 45 percent compared to the wildlife restoration of 55 percent.*

**** The Department's Wildlife Trust currently has a corpus of \$23 million and the lifetime license fund is at \$4 million. Currently, 37½ percent of the conservation stamp revenue is marked, by legislation, for deposit into the Wildlife Trust Fund, as is 50 percent of the lifetime conservation stamp, both of which flow into the corpus of this fund. Interest from the trust is allocated through the budget process, in accordance with Commission direction, to utilize a percentage basis for projects related to habitat, constituent education and alternative funding. Additionally, up to 6 percent of the lifetime license fund corpus can be transferred annually to the Game and Fish operating fund for general operations.*

**** Effective January 1, 2000, the Department began collecting access donations for the purpose of acquiring private and public land easements, in accordance with WS 23-1-501 (d). In FY 01, legislation expanded this program to include 25 percent of the revenue received from conservation stamps. Legislation in subsequent sessions added a provision in which 50 percent of the lifetime conservation stamp was earmarked into the fund in addition to state court ordered wildlife restitution awards. All of these sources of funding equal approximately \$850,000 annually.*

BUDGETARY TREND

During the early 1990s the Department's budget grew for a variety of reasons, including increased demand for agency services and increases in operating costs from significant worker's compensation rate changes (from less than 1 percent in FY 91 to FY 96 rates of 4.11 percent) to higher costs for building operations and charges for statewide cost allocations. The fee increase of 1991 provided funding to meet those needs on only a short-term basis.

In FY 94, the Department responded to declining deer and antelope license numbers by recognizing that spending had to be reduced to close the gap between estimated revenue and budget, or cash reserves would begin to significantly decline. Through substantially downsizing the Department's vehicle fleet, reducing land acquisition and eliminating 10 percent (31) of the Department's permanent positions in FY 96 as well as smaller reductions in many Department programs, the Department was able to close the revenue/expenditure gap.

From FY 93 to FY 98 Department revenues exceeded expenditures during three of those years, resulting in a net deficit for the seven-year period at over \$6 million. Even though Department expenditures in FY 97 were 13 percent less than in FY 93, the Department still brought in \$1.1 million less than it expended. FY 97 was the first year to receive any additional license revenue due to the fee increase approved by the Wyoming State Legislature in 1996. Although approximately 50 percent of the fee increase was in effect in FY 97, the amount of additional license revenue was only \$700,000 due to the Department's continuing reductions in quotas for deer and antelope licenses for both regular and reduced price doe fawn drawings, for the third consecutive year. During the 1996 and 1997, hunt years (FY 97/98) approximately 115,000 deer and antelope licenses were issued. In hunt year 1998, the number declined again to 110,500, a historic 30-year low. For comparative purposes, in 1982, the Department issued 211,000 deer and antelope licenses; in 1992 the Department issued 249,000 licenses for those same species.

In FY 98, the year in which the full license fee increase was realized, the Department's revenue exceeded expenditures by less than \$100,000. Also, due to the moratorium on land acquisition not being removed until the latter part of the fiscal year, expenditures in the area of land acquisition remained extremely low (less than \$100,000) for the fourth consecutive year. This trend continued into FY 99 allowing Department expenditures to remain at a lower level than originally projected. Accordingly, the license fee increase, while helping to offset reduced quotas and accordingly license sales volumes, only returned Department revenue to the previous levels realized in FY 94.

During 1999 and 2000, the Department's number of deer and antelope licenses issued increased slightly too approximately 129,000 in hunt year 2000. These small increases in volume, along with a lack of land acquisition and administrative facility capital construction during this period, allowed the Department's cash balance to stay relatively constant through FY 01. However, license volume again dipped in hunt year 2001 (FY 02) to 122,000. Even with an inequity license fee adjustment approved in the 2000 Legislative session which became effective on January 1, 2001 for non-resident daily fishing licenses and resident and non-resident deer licenses, license revenue for FY 02 only increased three percent from the previous year. Accordingly, in FY 02 and FY 03, the Department experienced two years of deficit spending, in which approximately \$6.5 million of its operating cash balance was utilized.

In the 2003 Legislative session, the Department was able to secure an inflationary fee increase of approximately 20 percent for the majority of licenses issued. This fee increase, which went into effect, January 1, 2004, reversed the deficit spending trend, and since that date Department revenues have exceeded expenditures in fiscal years from 2004, excepting 2010, in which revenues and expenditures approximated each other. During this time period, there has also been a slight upturn in deer and antelope licenses issued, up to 165,000 licenses in 2010, which is still, however, nowhere near at the volumes of the early 1990's.

In the 2007 Legislative session, the Department secured another inflationary license adjustment of 20 percent, which went into effect January 1, 2008. The Department also received a one-year appropriation, entitled license recoupment, through which the Department received \$1.1 million in FY 08, to offset lost revenue, from legislatively approved free and reduced price licenses. This appropriation has been funded through FY 12 with the Department receiving \$3.5 million cumulatively since this statutory provision was enacted.

Federal Aid dollar increases through FY 02 partially offset license revenue declines. However, those increases came with certain restrictions. Sport fishing restoration funds, which accounted for the majority of the increased federal dollars, rather than terrestrial wildlife restoration funds which do not have similar limitations, require a maintenance of effort of state spending of \$3.8 million before any federal dollars can be earned. Additionally, 15 percent of the expenditures are earmarked for boating access projects. While for several years, dollars allocated to sport fish (DJ) grew at a more rapid rate than those for wildlife restoration (PR) and the Department during that time expanded its boating access budget and its aquatic habitat budget to include fish passage work, that trend was reversed in 2010, when the PR apportionment was 40 percent higher than the DJ apportionment. While 2011 saw reduced apportionments for both PR and DJ to more historic levels, the wildlife restoration program continued to receive more funding than sport fish. Accordingly, there have been no additional allocations to sport fish and some reduction in the amount being spent for boating access projects.

A new federal program, State Wildlife Grants, began providing funding in 2003. Since that time, between \$550,000 and \$750,000 annually has been apportioned to Wyoming for projects involving species at risk. The Department has utilized funding primarily for survey and inventory work and research work performed by the University of Wyoming Cooperative Research Unit, in addition to a few projects involving population management related to grizzly bears. State match dollars have primarily come from license related revenue. The Department completed its required conservation strategy in 2006, and the plan was approved by USFWS early that fall. The Department revised its conservation strategy in 2011 with the document submitted to USFWS that year for review and approval. To date, as this program is subject to an annual appropriation by Congress, the Department has limited the use of these funds to primarily 1-3 year projects, rather than ongoing programs. In 2011, due to the delay of Congressional action on the federal budget, the Department had still not received any appropriation as of April 2011 for the federal year beginning October 1, 2010 with the concern that due to overall federal budget cutbacks, the future funding of this program remained uncertain.

The Department continues to follow the cyclical funding process of building cash reserves after a license fee increase and then spending down that increase in anticipation of a license fee adjustment approved by the Legislature. License adjustments are certainly not guaranteed, therefore, the Department has been relatively conservative in its spending trends to date, as there are often expenditure requirements outside of the Department's control, to include legislatively required salary adjustments and the growing costs of health insurance. For example, health insurance alone now constitutes almost 8 percent of the Department's budget.

Over the past several years, Department spending has expanded primarily in the areas of habitat, access, trophy game management, disease containment (specifically whirling disease and brucellosis), and information technology. Several of these areas were identified by constituents as priorities; in the case of information technology, infrastructure has had to expand, both to address security issues and to be able to provide information requested by constituents.

Additionally, during FY 02, the Department began to address capital construction needs at hatcheries and in regional offices. While some work was done with license dollars, the Department realized that both the number and the magnitude of individual projects, to the extent of well over \$50 million, outstripped the Department's ability to fund them. Accordingly, legislative funding was requested for some major projects in 2004; approximately \$4 million was granted, followed by \$15.8 million in the 2006 Legislative session. The focus of this funding was for hatchery renovation and expansion, although funding was also included for a replacement Pinedale office. In 2008 the Wyoming Legislature appropriated \$14.5 million for the construction of an addition to the Cheyenne Headquarters building. Since 2008, the Department has continued to receive some funding for capital construction projects, with \$4.5 million awarded for work at the Tensleep hatchery. In the last 2010 and 2011 legislative sessions, several small projects were funded for a cumulative amount of approximately \$1.8 million. While the Department funds major maintenance for properties out of its operating budget to the extent of \$1.5 to \$2 million annually, it will continue to seek legislative funding for capital construction projects in the biennial budget sessions.

Additionally, future funding from both traditional (license) and nontraditional sources will continue to be pursued in the next few years. Over the past six years, the Wildlife Heritage Foundation, a Department supported 501(c)(3) has provided some funding for projects for the Department. The Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Coalition, which auctions off Governor's licenses annually, has been another source of funding along with the Governor's Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust Fund, which has provided funding to a number of conservation organizations, including the Department, for habitat related projects. The Department, in recent years, has put more emphasis than in the past on management of nongame species. The continuation of these programs would be much aided by additional funding sources, intended for that purpose.

While we will insure Department assets continue to be managed in a cost effective manner in an attempt to adequately meet our constituent requirements, it may be difficult, if not impossible, to continue current programs at existing levels of service, without securing additional "non-earmarked" funding in the future. The Department continues to research sources and mechanisms

to secure future funding from sources other than hunters and anglers as the scope of its responsibilities cover all wildlife species, not just those hunted and fished.

IV. SERVICE POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS

WYOMING RESIDENTS

The Department's constituents are people, not wildlife. In 2000, the U.S. Bureau of the Census estimated Wyoming had 493,782 residents. By 2010, that number had grown 14.1 percent to 563,626 people, an almost 25 percent increase over a 20-year period. Growth was seen in almost every county in Wyoming, with the largest amount occurring in counties with a large presence from the oil and natural gas industry. Sublette and Campbell counties experienced the most growth, showing increases of 73 percent and 37 percent, respectively. Other counties showed a significant amount of growth in the same 10-year period, surpassing the state-wide increase (Lincoln, 24 percent; Crook, 20 percent; Johnson, 21 percent; and Sweetwater and Teton, both 17 percent). Hot Springs and Platte counties showed very minor (2 percent) declines in population.

During 2005, the Human Dimensions Committee of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies conducted a multi-state study to determine the *Wildlife Values in the West*. During previous work, researchers identified four basic value orientations held by people towards wildlife. These include Utilitarian (believe wildlife should be used and managed for human benefit), Mutualist (humans and wildlife are meant to co-exist or live in harmony), Pluralist (have beliefs consistent with both the Utilitarian and Mutualist view points), and Distances (either are uninterested in wildlife or have weak value orientations toward wildlife).

Within the 19 western states, approximately 34 percent of residents can be classified as utilitarian, 20 percent as pluralists, 33 percent are mutualists, and 13 percent possess distanced orientations. In contrast, 44 percent of Wyoming residents were found to hold utilitarian value orientations, 31 percent were identified as pluralists, 18 percent were mutualists, and only 7 percent held distanced value orientations.

Although many of the new residents appear to be hunters, anglers, and wildlife watchers, their rapid arrival has had consequences for wildlife. Industrial and residential development negatively impacts terrestrial habitats and can have significant impacts on water resources. Likewise, many of the new arrivals have different opinions and attitudes toward wildlife than those of long-time residents. This increases the need for the Departmental awareness of the variety of attitudes and opinions of stakeholders when considering wildlife management decisions. In 2006, the Department determined an expansion of the mineral development corresponds to increased incidents of poaching, wanton destruction, and other serious wildlife violations.

CURRENT CHARACTERISTICS

Hunters and Anglers

The 2006 *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* collected considerable data on both national and state wildlife users. Findings indicate that 14 percent of the national population age 16 or older either hunt or fish; that number rising to 38 percent when

those people who participated in some sort of wildlife-watching are included. Trends continue to show that the majority of hunters and anglers in the United States are white and male. Most are age 35 or older and earn more than \$40,000 per year. Wyoming data collected by the *2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* indicates that 29 percent of Wyoming's residents age 16 and older either hunt or fish.

Non-Consumptive Users:¹

Nationally, 31 percent of the United States population age 16 and older participates in some form of non-consumptive wildlife-associated recreation. Most are white and age 35 or older. Unlike consumptive users, the majority (54 percent) of non-consumptive wildlife users are female. On average, these people tend to earn more than \$40,000 per year.

Approximately 48 percent of Wyoming residents age 16 and older participate in some form of non-consumptive wildlife-associated recreation. Similar to national trends, the majority are age 35 or older and white. Unlike in national trends, the majority (53 percent) are male. All reported participants in non-consumptive activities earned \$40,000 or more per year.

Wildlife is a quality of life issue with many Wyoming residents, and it represents a major part of Wyoming's allure for visitors. Wyoming ranks at, or near the top, nationally, in percentage of the population participating in wildlife-associated recreation.

FUTURE TRENDS

Short Term Trends:

Both nationally and in Wyoming, participation in both consumptive and non-consumptive wildlife associated recreation have declined since 1991. A review of Wyoming's demographic data indicates that Wyoming's population is aging and becoming more concentrated in urban areas; two factors identified as contributing to the national decline in hunting and angling participation. The economic and social conditions associated with these demographic trends are unlikely to abate in the near future.

Because sportsmen have traditionally been the backbone of conservation efforts and funding, this trend has potentially severe implications for state fish and wildlife agencies. As part of an effort to remove potential barriers to hunter recruitment, the 2008 Wyoming legislature passed a bill that amended the hunter safety statute to establish a hunter mentor program. Based on the try-before-you-buy concept, the program is consistent with the national Families Afield initiative. Wyoming's hunter mentor program allows any person who has not received hunter safety certification to apply for a special authorization to hunt while being accompanied by a mentor for one calendar year. A mentor must be 18 years of age or older and must have hunter safety certification and a valid Wyoming hunting license. To date, 1,680 hunters have been mentored through the program.

¹ *Nonconsumptive uses are wildlife related activities which do not result in the removal of the animal from its environment. Examples might include wildlife observation, photography, nature study, etc.*

The Department continues to place additional emphasis on recruiting new hunters and anglers, and retaining existing hunters and anglers. In fact, in 2008, the Department hired a Hunter and Angler Recruitment Coordinator to focus on those efforts. Working with our partners in state and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and others, the Department is looking at ways we can get more people out in the fields, rivers, lakes, and woods.

Long Term Trends:

Some longer term trends (two or more years) are also important. Access for hunting and fishing has become a problem as access to private lands has become more restrictive. With a larger percentage of hunters and anglers being forced to use public lands, crowding at public access sites could become heavy, especially those close to out-of state urban centers. The Department's Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) access program works to alleviate this problem through its Hunter Management Area and Walk-in Hunting and Walk-in Fishing Programs.

In 2010, the Hunter Management Area program enrolled 1,099,125 private acres on 49 management areas. The Walk-in Hunting Program provided 681,683 private acres as well as 43 stream miles and 27 lake acres for waterfowl hunting. In addition to the private acres enrolled in the Walk-in and Hunter Management Areas, the Department's access work provided access to more than 1,687,000 public acres that otherwise may have been landlocked and inaccessible for public use. The Walk-in Fishing program currently has 58 fishing areas covering 10 drainages. These access areas contain 4,645 lake acres, 299 pond acres and 96 stream miles available for public fishing.

Walk-in programs are funded to a large extent through the Game and Fish AccessYes program. AccessYes contributions from anglers and hunters usually occur at the time of license purchases and applications for limited quota licenses.

V. TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Since the mid-1990s, the Department has worked to expand and enhance its technological infrastructure. During 2004, the Information Technology (IT) Branch was subdivided into three distinct work units: Application Development and Programming; IT Operations; and Geographic Information Systems. This expansion has allowed the Department to develop new problem solving capacities, increase productivity, and provide new services to the public. However, as the Department has become more dependent on its IT infrastructure, new complications and concerns have been identified. Some of these issues, our efforts to incorporate new technologies, and efforts to address problems are outlined below.

ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT

Compared to the private sector, government organizations have been slow to adopt new information technologies. Even agencies that have come to rely on computer systems have largely automated existing manual procedures based on the movement of paper and have not implemented the major shift in management practices seen in the commercial world. There, IT has been used to move away from functional business units and to restructure organizations around the processes that support the core business, seeking to provide quicker and better service to their customer base, and thereby cementing a relationship with the customer. Government

organizations have begun to learn and apply some of these management practices based on new information technologies.

For The Department, this means a shift in the way we provide services to our constituents. It also means that new laws, policies, management techniques, and security practices are being called for. The very nature of our organization is changing. If we are to manage wildlife, we must be able to effectively manage electronic information resources.

Issues related to bandwidth serve as an excellent example. In many ways, our IT network is like a plumbing system except instead of carrying water, our network carries data. The capacity of our network determines how much information can be carried at any one time. This amount of information is known as bandwidth. As wildlife issues in Wyoming continue to be influenced by world energy markets, expanding human populations, long-term drought, and a host of other social, economic, political, and climatic trends, Department personnel will need a greater and greater ability to access electronic information, research, and data, in addition to a need for personnel to communicate with each other electronically. In other words, the Department is likely to continue to be in a cycle of increasing its bandwidth as our management efforts become more complicated.

Additionally, the technology tools necessary to address wildlife issues are becoming more centered around Geographic Information Systems and the need for remote access to all information and data is becoming more prevalent. As these needs increase, the Department will need to search for better solutions to address them.

ELECTRONIC COMMERCE

The sale and purchase of goods via the Internet has become a common practice in modern American society. Because this form of commerce is readily available to a majority of the public, the Department has worked to adapt this technology to provide a number of services. Starting in January 2007, the Department allowed hunters to apply online for the various limited quota licenses. Then in fall of 2009 the Department began selling a variety of stamps and hunting and fishing licenses online. These include antelope, deer, fall turkey, bird/small game, black bear, mountain lion, and fishing licenses. Conservation stamps and pheasant and elk management stamps are also available. Finally, the Department began selling Aquatic Invasive Species boat registrations online in 2010. In calendar year 2010, 1,082,827 items were processed through the Department e-Commerce systems, totaling \$65,806,416.

VIDEOCONFERENCING

Over the last several years, the Department has worked to realize a variety of benefits from video conferencing technology. At the time of this writing, the Department headquarters building and all the regional offices have been equipped to participate in videoconferences. Desktop video conference capabilities should also be realized soon throughout the Department, along with the advent of a new State of Wyoming centralized e-mail system.

Historically, employees would drive hundreds of miles to participate in meetings. In addition to the employees' lost productivity, these trips would often require people to stay overnight, in which case the Department would incur hotel, fuel, and per diem cost. The existing

videoconference network has reduced the need for much of this travel and expense. The Department has already realized significant benefit from these tools, and developing technologies are expected to enhance this productivity. Some Department programs are working to provide presentations and information to the public with the existing infrastructure.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS

As noted above, wildlife management has always relied upon geospatial information to map herd distributions, track changes in habitats, and address political and biological issues. Over the last decade, as natural resource issues have become more contentious, the ability to maintain, analyze, and interpret geographic information has become a necessity. The Department has a long history of using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to address resource and research needs. Unfortunately, much of this work has been done by individual employees without any consistent or coordinated direction. The problem is exacerbated as multiple agencies (both State and Federal) try to collaborate and develop more comprehensive datasets. In an effort to address this area, the Department is participating and contributing data towards a cooperative, multi-agency central Decision Support System. This system will be used to assist with identification of crucial habitats with respect to a variety of development activities. This is known as the Wyoming Interagency Spatial Database and On-line Management (WISDOM) tools for wildlife project and is housed at the Wyoming Geographic Information Science Center (WyGISC) at the University of Wyoming. In addition, the Department has created a five-year GIS implementation plan, however limited staffing opportunities have negated abilities to implement a central shared GIS program. Despite the problems, the need persists and IT personnel continue to search for solutions with limited personnel and within existing technological constraints.

COLLABORATIVE SOFTWARE

Utilizing some of the new information technologies outlined above, software companies have been building collaboration functions into their software suites. Individual components of the suites now share common user interfaces and functions, making them easier to use together. Distributed teams and workgroups, unhampered by distance, can now share forms, reports, project management tools, and other resources. Team members can be automatically informed by e-mail whenever a change is made to a document. Reports, papers, spreadsheets, and even databases can be published directly to the Internet or an Intranet. Changes in a report located on a server in Cheyenne can automatically update a spreadsheet on a server in Cody. It's all part of the new paradigm to break down distance and time barriers to the flow of information which could have dramatic benefits for our Department.

THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY LABOR FORCE

Historically, the Department had difficulty retaining qualified IT personnel. Positions provided training and experience, which personnel used to obtain more lucrative jobs in private industry. In recent years, however, recruitment efforts were modified and the Department has been able to attract highly qualified people to the stability of government service and the quality of life offered by the state of Wyoming. In the short term, IT administrators expect personnel turnover rates to remain low.

Unfortunately, three prominent issues may impact the Department's future IT workforce. First, as government agencies and private industry grow more dependent on information technologies, the demand for qualified and experienced people is expected to grow. If market demand cannot

be accommodated, the Department may again see frequent turnover in its IT staff. Second, many aspects of IT and the IT workforce are becoming more specialized. In other words, many IT professionals are becoming experts in specific applications, rather than having the more generalized knowledge, skill, and abilities found in the current workforce. This trend could affect the Department by making it more difficult to both recruit and retain people with the appropriate technical abilities. Third, centralizing common IT services throughout State government is becoming more popular throughout the United States with the thought that reducing overlap of workforce abilities across all state agencies will save the State of Wyoming money. While there may be opportunity to leverage this advantage, failure in any consolidation efforts can create negative business impacts to the Department and its constituents. Because of this, there must be proving grounds model of how common services might be successfully implemented in Wyoming government, while at the same time keeping costs to agencies at a reasonable level.

MALICIOUS/ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES

Certain elements of the public have always engaged in malicious or illegal activities ranging from graffiti artists and vandals to organized criminal networks. The expansion of the Internet, electronic government, and electronic commerce has provided new opportunities for these individuals to pursue their goals. In response, agencies and companies spend millions of dollars protecting themselves from spyware, electronic viruses, worms, and fraud. When viewed collectively, the actions and reactions resemble an arms race. Unfortunately, the global nature of the Internet, the adaptive nature of the criminals, and the lack of sufficient law enforcement limits society's ability to end the "race". As such, the Department's need to develop, purchase, and implement IT security measures has grown in recent years and is only expected to accelerate. As of July, 2010 the Department is now required to comply with Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standards. This brings with it an additional set of requirements in order to meet and maintain compliance. These requirements affect everything from network infrastructure to the individual desktop.

FRAGMENTATION VERSUS STANDARDIZATION

There are a number of ways an agency can meet the IT needs of its employees. On one extreme, employees can be responsible for purchasing and maintaining their own equipment. This management tends to be expensive and often prevents coordinated efforts since hardware and software are not required to conform to minimum standards. On the other hand, an agency may enforce rigid compliance to technological and administrative benchmarks. This scenario tends to be more cost effective, but this effectiveness can cause a lack of functionality and service. With the exponential rate that technologies are evolving, having the ability to provide the desired technologies in a timely manner, at a reasonable cost, and then to be able to support those technologies when employees need assistance can also be a daunting challenge. This is especially true considering that this must be done in accordance and in compliance with the security requirements noted above.

The Department's IT administrators must constantly weigh the technological needs of employees with the budgetary and technical needs of the agency to find the most "workable" balance of authority and independence.

VI. ECONOMIC VARIABLES

KEY ECONOMIC VARIABLES

The following important economic variables impact the ability of the Department to effectively meet its mission:

Inflation - Results in increasing Department expenditures to maintain the same or even lower levels of customer service; increases costs to wildlife users and reduces their disposable income.

Unemployment - Reduces customers' ability to participate in wildlife-associated recreation.

Personal income - Comparatively slow growth in this variable for some customers (i.e. Wyoming residents), together with increasing number of people on fixed incomes causes many to feel they are being priced out of hunting and fishing.

Interest rates- High interest rates temporarily slow statewide habitat loss because of downturns in extractive industries, housing markets, property, and equipment purchases. Interest rates influence Department revenue from operating cash and the Wildlife Trust.

Crop and livestock market fluctuations - Affect hunting and fishing access to private lands and landowner tolerance of wildlife. Changes in traditional patterns of land use can impact both habitat and access on private lands in either a positive or negative direction.

License fee revenues - Department revenues depend on license sales. These sales fluctuate dramatically and unpredictably because of weather and its impacts on wildlife populations. In addition, license fees are controlled by the Legislature. These two factors make it necessary for the Department to maintain a large cash reserve to offset several of the economic variables noted above.

Energy Prices – Rising energy prices throughout the western United States have caused the Department's operating expenses to rise dramatically. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a rise in gas prices has also had an effect on the number of non-resident hunters and anglers visiting Wyoming, which in turn affects Department revenue, and may impact the Department's ability to manage herds through harvest.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Since the late 1990's world energy markets have become a significant factor in the conservation of Wyoming's wildlife and wildlife habitats. Historically, Wyoming's economy has been characterized by "boom and bust" cycles tied to world energy reserves. When oil and coal demands outpace supply, production in Wyoming has expanded (boom), and when supplies have exceeded demand, production has declined (bust). Over the last decade, however, developing nations with large populations and growing affluence (such as China and India) have begun to purchase more oil and have helped maintain high market prices. Under these conditions, corporations have found it profitable to extract Wyoming's minerals. Likewise, technological advances have allowed previously untapped resources to be profitably developed.

Expanded production of coal-bed methane in the Powder River and Green River Basins, exemplify how a society tries to address its economic and conservation needs. On the one hand, expanded mineral development has resulted in thousands of high paying jobs for local residents and recent arrivals. Mineral severance taxes have increased which has allowed the Legislature and local communities to maintain and improve the services provided to residents. At the same time, however, this expansion of industrial and residential development has impacted wildlife habitat. Law enforcement officials have detected significant increases in poaching, wanton destruction, and other serious wildlife-related violations in areas of increasing mineral production. As a result, mineral companies, State and Federal Agencies, local communities, nongovernmental organizations, and concerned citizens face a continuing challenge to determine an appropriate balance between our economic prosperity and our natural legacy.

It is also important to note that wildlife-related recreation is a multi-million dollar component of the tourism industry in Wyoming. *The 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation* indicated Wyoming accommodated approximately 107,000 anglers, 52,000 hunters, and 451,000 non-resident wildlife watchers during 2006. Collectively, these people enjoyed almost 3.3 million recreation days and spent over \$450 million in Wyoming during 2006.

IMPACTS OF FUTURE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND THE AGENCY'S RESPONSE

The current cycle of mineral development is expected to persist long into the future. With this industrial expansion, the Department finds reasons to be both optimistic and pessimistic about the future.

On one hand, development is known to have long-lasting effects on both wildlife populations and habitats. History has shown that it can take centuries before developed areas return to a relatively “natural” state. Such changes can affect the amount of wildlife-related opportunities the state can provide by eliminating recreation from some areas and concentrating recreation in other areas. It is likely such shifts would negatively affect the sale of hunting and fishing licenses and limit the Department’s ability to provide services to the people of Wyoming. On the other hand, the severance taxes paid by the mineral industry have provided the Wyoming Legislature with resources to help pay for needed efforts related to facilities maintenance, wildlife diseases, and sage-grouse preservation. Likewise, mitigation resources from energy companies, federal efforts to address resource needs in Wyoming, and a mobilizing nongovernmental community also provide opportunities to minimize impacts to Wyoming’s wildlife. It is doubtful that Wyoming will ever be the same, but it is also doubtful that the future will be as bad as some predict. In light of these changes, the Department will have to face a variety of challenges. It will be important to for the Department maintain a fiscally responsible operation and to seek new resources and partners to address the myriad of issues. Finally, we will need to maintain a degree of flexibility so we can take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves.

VII. IMPACT OF FEDERAL STATUTES/REGULATIONS

HISTORIC ROLE OF FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT

While wildlife conservation in Wyoming is statutorily vested with the state, federal involvement extends back into pre-statehood days. The establishment of national parks and forest reserves (later national forests) and the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 are examples of federal actions which had long-term benefits for wildlife in Wyoming. Important federal legislation which has impacted the Department operations includes the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (1958), the Wilderness Act (1964), the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (1968), the National Environmental Protection Act (1970), the Clean Air Act (1970), the Clean Water Act (1972), the Endangered Species Act (1973) and others. A list appears below:

1. National Environmental Policy Act (1969)
2. Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (1934)
3. Endangered Species Act (1973)
4. Migratory Bird Treaty Act (1918)
5. Bald Eagle Protection Act (1940)
6. Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (1977)
7. Sikes Act (1960)
8. Clean Water Act (1972)
9. Federal Land Policy and Management Act (1976)
10. National Forest Management Act (1976)
11. Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act (1974)
12. Public Rangelands Improvement Act (1978)
13. Wilderness Act (1964)
14. Wild & Scenic Rivers Act (1968)
15. Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act (1960)
16. Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (1965)
17. Knutson-Vandenberg Act (1930)
18. Clean Air Act (1970)
19. National Park Service Organic Act (1916)
20. Lacey Act (1900)
21. Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act (1934)
22. Migratory Bird Conservation Act (1929)
23. Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (1976)
24. Safe Drinking Water Act (1974)
25. Federal Water Project Recreation Act (1965)
26. Food Security Act (1985)
27. Administrative Procedures Act (1946)
28. Forest Conservation Act (1980)
29. Water Resources Development Act (1986)
30. Rivers and Harbors Act (1899)
31. Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act (1986)
32. Great Plains Conservation Act (1936)
33. Taylor Grazing Act (1943)
34. National Wildlife Refuge Systems Administration Act (1966)
35. Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act (1980)

36. Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (1986)
37. Federal Water pollution Control Act (1948)
38. Organic Act (1916)
39. Federal Noxious Weed Act (1974)
40. Federal Seed Act (1939)
41. Federal Plant Pest Act (1957)
42. Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act (1980)
43. Toxic Substances Control Act (1976)
44. Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (1938)
45. Federal Environmental Pesticide Control Act (1972)
46. Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act (1971)
47. Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (1937)
48. Federal Aid in Fish Restoration Act (1950)
49. Federal On-Shore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act (FOOGLRA) (1987)
50. Food, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act (1990)
51. Federal Power Act (1935)
52. Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act (1973)
53. Small Reclamation Project Act (1956)
54. Water Bank Act (1970)
55. Water Resources Act (1991)
56. Energy Policy Act (2005)

Note: Many of the above-referenced acts involve interrelated regulations and authorities such that any one statute may not specify provisions for state wildlife agency involvement, but in conjunction with another related statute, that involvement is provided for.

The Pittman-Robertson Act (1939) created a pool of funds for wildlife restoration of which Wyoming receives close to \$7 million annually. The Sport Fish Restoration Act and Wallop-Breaux Amendments similarly provide over \$5 million annually to the state in fish restoration funds. These acts protect fish and wildlife funds, such as license revenue and associated interest from diversion for other purposes. The state of Wyoming has utilized the comprehensive planning option in accounting for the Department's expenditure of PR and DJ funds rather than the more limiting project-by-project option. Smaller amounts are received by the Department from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the Endangered Species Act and from Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service for disease control.

In 2001, the State Wildlife Grants (SWG) program began through a package included in the 2001 Interior Appropriations Act. SWG was based off of the Conservation and Reinvestment Act and made available to states that had completed a comprehensive wildlife conservation strategy by 2005. Now called the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP), the strategy identified species of greatest conservation need in each state. SWG is a competitive grants program, for which states can apply for funds for the development and restoration of wildlife and habitats, with a priority on species of greatest conservation need as identified in the SWAP. The federal government will provide up to 75 percent of the cost for successful projects. In 2010, Wyoming received over \$700,000 from SWG.

DESCRIPTION OF CURRENT FEDERAL ACTIVITIES

The Department's involvement with federal legislation and policy is important and continuous. By virtue of its administrative role in Federal Aid funds and its management responsibility including threatened and endangered species and waterfowl, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is an important partner in wildlife conservation. The Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service are also extremely important in wildlife conservation since they administer vast acreages of important wildlife habitat and sizable wildlife populations. Department involvement in land use decisions on federal lands is of considerable importance to both wildlife and wildlife users. Other federal agencies whose activities are important to fish and wildlife include the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Army Corps of Engineers, Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies involved in land and water management issues.

VIII. OTHER LEGAL ISSUES

IMPACT OF LITIGATION

Primarily related to the Endangered Species Act, continuing litigation, resulting in the inability to delist recovered species thus allowing state assumption of management authority, has limited Wyoming's conservation efforts for threatened and endangered species. Extended legal challenges to grizzly bear and wolf delisting divert resources from conservation, and hinder the Department from implementing a comprehensive management program for these recovered species and other wildlife impacted.

IMPACT OF ANTICIPATED STATE LAW CHANGES

State legislation is at least as difficult to anticipate as federal legislation, and its impacts on wildlife conservation are similarly difficult to predict. However, several general issues are of potential concern:

Direct Legislative oversight could affect Department effectiveness by politicizing wildlife management, inhibiting constituent involvement, or diverting license revenues which would jeopardize annual federal aid revenues.

License set-asides could affect broad-based constituent support by further earmarking hunting licenses for specific constituent groups.

Loosened land use restrictions could result in lessening of environmental standards and create negative impacts on wildlife habitat.

IMPACT OF COURT CASES

A disturbing trend in wildlife conservation is the increased number of wildlife issues which are decided in the courts. Litigation is costly and controversial. More effective conflict resolution in wildlife issues could reduce the need for and cost of litigation.

IMPACT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT REQUIREMENTS

Local governments have been the recipients of Department assistance through a variety of programs/grants for development of wildlife interpretive facilities, public use facilities, stream improvements, shooting facilities, etc. In general, these programs have been positive for both the

Department and the local communities. The future of these programs is a function of available funding from both partners. Clearly, these partnerships represent a potential source of support for both wildlife and wildlife users. They can also be of considerable economic benefit to communities seeking to develop tourism or address a variety of species or habitat related issues.

IX. SELF EVALUATION

AGENCY PERFORMANCE

When the Department's strategic plan shifted from a species-based to a program-based document, program supervisors and members of the planning staff collaborated to develop performance measures for each program. That practice has been perpetuated within this version of the Department's Strategic Plan.

For each program, at least one quantifiable performance measure has been identified. In some cases, the Department measures "customer" satisfaction using an external survey sent to hunters and anglers. In other cases, the effectiveness of management is evaluated using species population estimates or production records. Finally, some programs have the capacity to evaluate employee efficiency, which is used to measure the effectiveness of the larger program.

Annual measures of agency performance will be reported to the Governor of Wyoming, the Wyoming Legislature, and the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission. Data used to measure the Department's performance will be audited every three years to ensure accuracy. The Strategic Plan will be updated every five years to ensure that programs and performance measures remain relevant.

INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES

In order to effectively meet the Department's mission and achieve our goals it is imperative that wildlife conservation in Wyoming become a cooperative effort. The involvement of government at all levels, nonprofit conservation/environmental organizations and the private sector is clearly the most important aspect of developing wildlife conservation programs for the coming years. A hallmark of Department programs in the future will be the involvement of a variety of cooperators.

Examples of the Department's cooperation with other agencies are many and varied. Habitat protection involves cooperative efforts with the Department of Environmental Quality, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wyoming State Engineer, Wyoming Water Development Commission and other agencies. Terrestrial and aquatic wildlife management involves cooperation and coordination with federal and state land managers on a variety of regional issues affecting Wyoming. Law enforcement efforts involve agents of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state and local law enforcement authorities. Education efforts involve educators at the state and local levels. Disease (e.g. brucellosis, chronic wasting disease, and whirling disease) eradication and management involves Animal, Plant and Health Inspection Service, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Colorado Division of Natural Resources. Perhaps most important, efforts in effective wildlife conservation involve a host of individuals. Landowners, conservationists, hunters, anglers, and a host of others make up the Department's

complex constituency. Without their cooperation, wildlife conservation in Wyoming would be impossible.

AGENCY-LEVEL PLAN

Department: Game and Fish

Mission: Conserving wildlife, serving people

Results Statement:

- Wyoming's wildlife and wildlife habitats are managed to maximize the economic, environmental and social values of importance to current and future generations.
- Wyoming values the unique aspects of its wildlife heritage, providing residents and nonresidents expanding access to wildlife-associated recreational experiences.
- The Department is a responsible steward of State assets and effectively responds to the needs of residents and nonresidents.

Contribution to Wyoming Quality of Life:

- Conserve Wyoming's wildlife and wildlife habitat for current and future generations.
- Provide residents and nonresidents access to wildlife-associated recreational experiences.
- Manage Department assets responsibly and actively involve people in wildlife management decisions.

Department Facts:

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is made up of five major administrative divisions, including 23 programs, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Division</u>	<u>#FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Wildlife Division	156.7	\$ 20,607,884
Fish Division	102.8	\$ 12,080,212
Services Division	99.3	\$ 14,589,686
Fiscal Division	50.9	\$ 6,061,115
Office of the Director	16.8	\$ 2,839,390
Other**	<u>52.4</u>	<u>\$ 16,722,201</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	478.9	\$ 72,900,488

**Includes permanent, contract and temporary positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

***Includes Wildlife Trust, Access Fund, State Wildlife and Landowner Incentive Grants, Competitive Grants, Nonrecurring Projects and General Fund appropriation (excluding 2010 AIS legislative appropriation).*

Primary Functions of the Game and Fish Department:

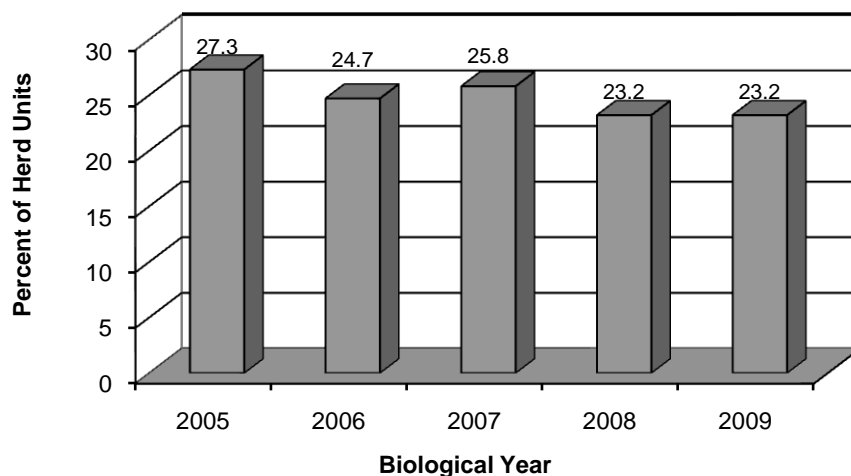
- **We conserve wildlife** by providing wildlife and wildlife habitat management, including scientific data collection, law enforcement, wildlife/human conflict management, research, habitat conservation and wildlife health services.
- **We serve people** by managing wildlife populations, conserving resources through habitat mitigation activities, providing access for wildlife-associated recreation and providing information and education about wildlife and wildlife-related issues.

- **We manage the human, fiscal, physical and other resources** necessary to carry out our mission, including people, money, lands, information, buildings and other facilities needed to support wildlife conservation in Wyoming.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department operates under the direction of the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission. Our headquarters office is in Cheyenne. Our regional offices are in Jackson, Pinedale, Cody, Sheridan, Green River, Laramie, Lander and Casper.

Statutory references: The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission is created and empowered in Title 23 of the Wyoming Statutes. The Department is created and placed under the direction and supervision of the Commission in W.S. § 23-1-401. The responsibilities of the Commission and the Department are defined in W.S. § 23-1-103. In these and associated statutes, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department is charged with providing “an adequate and flexible system of the control, propagation, management, protection and regulation of all Wyoming wildlife.”

Performance Measure #1: Percent of big game herds within 10 percent of population objective (Personnel in this program will work to ensure that at least 30 percent of big game herds are within \pm 10 percent of the population objective).



Story behind the performance:

While the Department is responsible for managing over 800 species of wildlife in Wyoming, many of our constituents are focused on the management of big game species (pronghorn antelope, mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat and bison). In addition, most of the Department’s annual income is derived from license sales for these species. Management of these species is the responsibility of the regional terrestrial wildlife biologists, regional game wardens and the regional terrestrial wildlife administration. Percentages reported are based on post-season population estimates of each species presented in the annual Big Game Hunting Season Recommendation Summaries (2006, 2007 and 2009) and the final big game Job Completion Reports (2007 and 2009).

Hunting seasons and harvest quotas developed by the Department are the primary tools for managing big game species. These are designed to manage herds for population objectives and desired male to female ratios.

Other factors, usually beyond the Department's control or difficult to address, such as access, weather extremes and wildlife disease outbreaks affect the Department's ability to manage herds toward objective. Lack of hunter access to some hunt areas, especially in eastern Wyoming, limits the Department's ability to obtain the harvest needed to maintain or obtain herd objectives. Weather conditions (drought, severe winters) have limited productivity of many deer and pronghorn herds, and many of these herds remain below objective. The Department currently manages some herds below objective because of the effects drought and other factors have had on wildlife habitat. Even when the drought ends, it takes several years for habitat conditions to improve enough to allow many herds to move towards objective. Elk populations are, in general, above objective despite increased cow harvest in recent years. Landscape-scale habitat improvements to benefit big game and other species are needed in many areas and could be funded by the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, the Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Coalition, and other sources.

Since 2005, an average of 24.8 percent of big game herds in Wyoming were within 10 percent of their population objective. Of the total 151 big game herds in Wyoming in 2009, 35 herds (23.2 percent) were at objective (+/- 10 percent), 49 (32.5 percent) were above objective, 38 (25.2 percent) were below objective and 29 herds (19.2 percent) had incomplete data. The percent of herds within 10 percent of their population objective has ranged from 23.2 percent to 27.3 percent.

Values reported in the graph above differ slightly from what was reported in the 2005 Strategic Plan. These former values did not include bison and excluded herds from the total that had incomplete data.

The Department began implementing the Strategic Habitat Plan (SHP), including incorporating nongame priority areas with those previously identified for big game. The revised SHP was adopted by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission in 2009. Personnel continue to emphasize habitat management and monitoring to federal land management agencies and to the public. The Department informs land management agencies and landowners of habitat improvement priority areas and, as resources are available, encourages joint collaboration on projects. Implementation of the SHP depends upon the cooperation of land management agencies and private landowners.

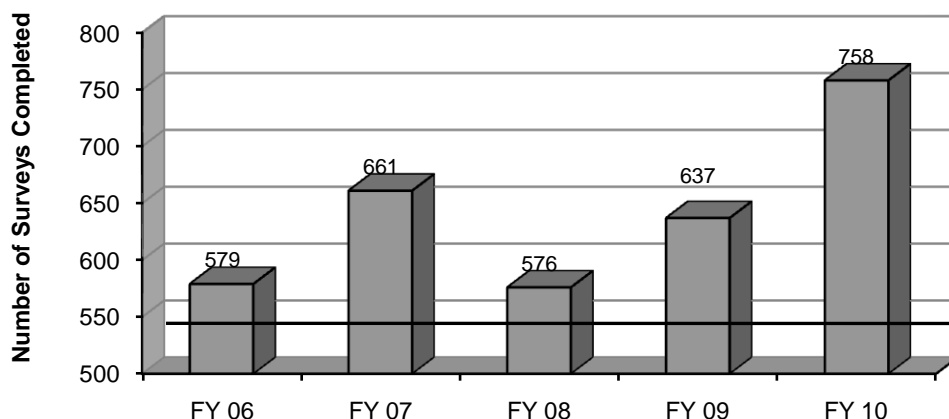
The Department employs habitat biologists in each region and habitat extension biologists in eastern Wyoming that focus on habitat monitoring and improvements on both public and private lands. Much of their effort pertains to big game, and funding from many sources is being pooled to address priorities in the SHP. Wildlife Division personnel continued to apply for habitat improvement funds from a variety of sources, including the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, the Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Coalition, many non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and federal programs.

Big game disease surveillance and research continue to be high priorities. Surveillance efforts for brucellosis in northwest Wyoming and chronic wasting disease across the state continued in 2009. The Department completed the five-year test and slaughter pilot project for brucellosis in the Pinedale elk herd, as recommended by the Governor's Brucellosis Coordination Team, in 2009. The Department continued to vaccinate on the state's feedgrounds to reduce the prevalence of brucellosis in elk. Recently, carotid artery worm, *Eleophoris*, has become a concern in Wyoming moose and statewide surveillance was conducted in 2009. Funding for the Department's Veterinary Services program was approximately \$1.57 million in FY 10.

What we propose to improve performance in next two years:

- Recommendations for big game hunting seasons will continue to consider factors such as habitat condition, drought, access and management of wildlife diseases in addition to the population objective. The Department will continue to fund and promote the Access Yes program in a cooperative effort between the Department and willing landowners. This program has allowed the Department to more effectively distribute hunter harvest by providing access to private lands.

Performance Measure #2: Number of stream and lake surveys completed (Personnel with this program will work to complete at least 540 stream and lake surveys per year).



Story behind the performance:

The quality of Wyoming's fisheries is a direct reflection of the quality of Wyoming's lakes, rivers and streams. Stream and lake surveys are conducted to determine the condition of fisheries. Until recently, surveys have been targeted toward evaluating the need to change management approaches, primarily for native and introduced sport fishes. The Department's survey strategy now includes more intensive surveys that emphasize watershed-level fishery evaluations for both our sport fish and native fish.

In FY 10, a total of 758 streams and lakes were surveyed. This is substantially higher than the five-year average of 642 surveys per year. Sampling intensity was higher because of increased activity for native species in the southwest portion of the state. Natural gas-field development and potential impact to native herptiles and elevated concern for the 3-species of fish native to the Green River caused an increase in activity. We continued to survey for native species of

concern as identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) for the Big Horn, Powder, Belle Fourche, Niobrara, Little Missouri, Cheyenne and Green river basins. These surveys tend to evaluate habitat and population conditions concurrently, resulting in more comprehensive assessments than previously conducted. Funding through the Governor's Endangered Species and General Fund appropriations supported a good portion of this increased level of activity.

Intensive population estimates that require multiple electrofishing passes through one sampling site were conducted most notably on the North Platte, Green, Bear, Snake, Salt, Greys, Hoback, Wind, Bighorn, Shoshone and Tongue rivers for both wild and stocked fishes. These repeated sampling of the same reach over one week with multiple boats and crews only count as a single completed survey. Enhanced water conditions this year provided better opportunities to survey sport fisheries on our major rivers and reservoirs.

The primary management plans guiding fisheries management survey work are called Basin Management Plans (BMP). In FY 07, we changed format and content templates for the plans; BMP revisions will provide a goal and objective format for our planned management activities.

The Aquatic Assessment Crew (AAC) again experienced staffing shortages due to personnel reassignment and turnover. The remaining AAC staff was able to direct the work of a large contingent of seasonal biologists that were able to complete or initiate scheduled surveys. A significant number of herptile surveys and stream surveys were conducted this year by the AAC.

Revision of the SHP was completed in 2009. As a consequence, we can more fully integrate SHP habitat priorities into the BMPs. Having SHP and SWAP elements in each BMP provides the scientific basis for prioritizing and directing our native species surveys. We may also redirect our effort to conduct investigations to avoid impacts or direct mitigation from energy development in the northeast and southwest portions of the state. Often these are areas where we have limited baseline data but where we have rich species diversity including species of greatest conservation need (SGCN).

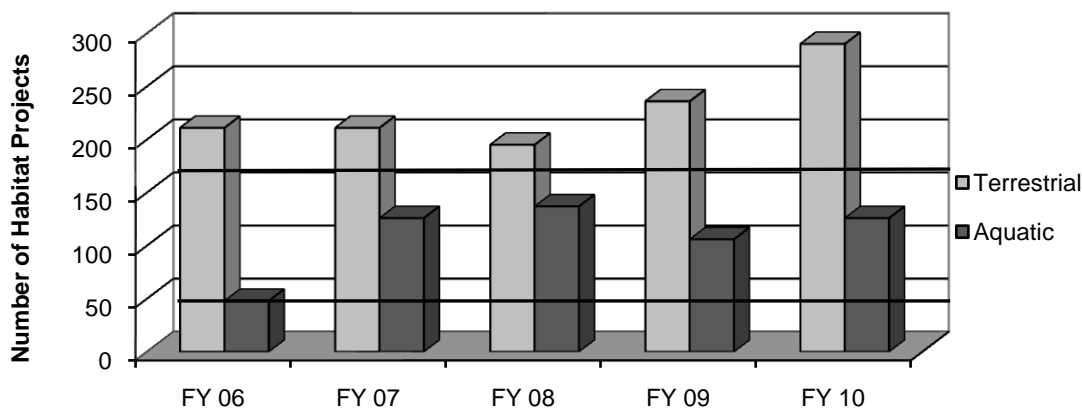
In order to meet data needs that were identified for aquatic species in the SWAP, the Department continually surveys streams and lakes. Surveys typically gather baseline inventory or trend monitoring data for SGCN. The continued availability of funding from the Governor's Endangered Species and General Fund appropriations greatly accelerated the pace of our investigations for many SGCN.

The Department continues to work with the Wyoming Cooperative Research Unit (COOP) to meet continuing research needs. In FY 10, the COOP Unit completed four fisheries studies (roundtail chub habitat use in lakes, sucker hybridization, impacts of flow augmentation from coalbed methane discharge and grazing regime impacts on terrestrial invertebrate input to streams). COOP Unit staffing reductions and the retirement of senior COOP staff limited the number of projects conducted at the University of Wyoming. Some research was conducted in cooperation with Colorado State University. Several projects are ongoing including hornyhead chub population dynamics, sucker swimming abilities, midget faded rattlesnake habitat use, road impacts on snakes and lizards, aquatic snail survey, and aspen-beaver dynamics and impacts on aquatic habitat.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Maintain a full complement of staff on the AAC. When the AAC is fully staffed, our performance increases substantially in terms of sampling productivity (numbers of species and numbers of streams surveyed) and allows us the opportunity to better balance our sport fish and native fish responsibilities.
- Continue evaluating sport fish regulations and our fish stocking programs. Fish stocking evaluations are necessary to assess and update brood stock management plans and refine the stocking program to make best use of the limited number of fish available. Continue to evaluate success of stocking larger trout to avoid walleye predation in our large reservoirs and evaluate our recently initiated Colorado River cutthroat trout and Firehole rainbow trout stocking activities.
- Seek to use partners such as the University of Wyoming or Wyoming Natural Diversity Database to assist in surveying bivalves, aquatic snails and land snails. Endangered Species Act (ESA) petitioners increasingly are targeting these invertebrate species but we are acutely short on relative abundance and distribution data to respond to requests for information.
- The acute concern and need to respond to aquatic invasive species (AIS) issues will reduce time that was planned for lake and stream surveys. Public information, public contacts and response for vessel inspection are crucial to restrict or stop the movement of invasive species into Wyoming waters. These duties will be a high priority for our biologists until we can mobilize AIS specialists to handle this workload.

Performance Measure #3: Number of habitat projects implemented annually (Personnel in this program will implement at least 150 terrestrial habitat projects and 45 aquatic habitat projects annually).



Story Behind the Last Year of Performance:

The Terrestrial Habitat Section planned 276 habitat projects and accomplished 240 projects (87 percent) during FY 10. Approximately 50 unplanned projects, defined as those requiring more than one percent of annual work hours (three days) of personnel time were accomplished during the fiscal year. Many Section personnel reported partial completion of projects during the fiscal year; however, the majority of these were evaluated as being completed for the fiscal year being considered. Most projects require two or more years to complete. Project components include

the initial inventory and analysis, project goal and objective planning, coordination and concurrence from partners, developing and submitting funding applications, completing engineering, cultural clearances, threatened and endangered species assessments, obtaining various permits, granting or contracting the work for on-the-ground implementation and final review prior to showing the project as completed. Factors contributing to uncompleted projects included inadequate funding; delayed permits, such as 404 permits; complicated National Environment Policy Act Environmental (NEPA) compliance processes on federal lands; concerns or cancellation by private landowners; lack of engineering; higher priorities or assignments from administrators; and weather conditions. A partial list of terrestrial habitat projects includes two landscape scale projects using satellite imagery to document land cover encompassing parts of the Lander, Cody Regions totaling over 5,500,000 acres; mule deer habitat assessments on 465,000 acres; moose habitat assessments on 135,000 acres; rangeland and habitat inventories on 252,000 acres; grazing management planning on 255,000 acres; conservation easements on 7,700 acres; 18,000 acres of prescribed fire; mechanical vegetation treatments on about 9,600 acres; herbicide treatments on about 12,000 acres; seeding projects on about 1,900 acres; planting about 18,700 shrubs and trees; and several hundred private landowners were assisted resulting in many on-the-ground habitat extension projects. Projects were accomplished by Section personnel working with partners and soliciting grants from outside sources, including Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Coalition, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, North American Foundation for Wild Sheep, Natural Resources Conservation Service Wyoming Farm Bill Programs, Water for Wildlife Foundation, Bowhunters of Wyoming, Pheasants Forever, U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Private Lands Program and Landowner Incentive Program, the Wyoming Governor's Sage-Grouse Fund, private landowners, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Recreation, and private and corporate donors among others. Terrestrial section personnel developed and administered about 45 Department trust fund projects, were directly involved with applications involving over 190 grants and assisted on administration of funds on a number of other projects. Many of the terrestrial habitat projects include development of grazing management plans, working on various internal and external working groups and partnerships, habitat improvement efforts (prescribed fire, herbicide applications, mechanical treatments, fence removal/modifications, seeding, water developments, etc.), wildlife environmental reviews, assisting with large land cover identification and classifications, BLM Resource Management Plan revisions, U.S. Forest Service plan revisions, as well as assistance on various habitat related research projects. Finally, recognizing the importance of completed habitat improvement projects, personnel annually collect data to document the number of acres and stream miles inventoried, results of management activities, and annual big game forage and shrub utilization on more than 250 transects. Terrestrial section personnel expect the number of projects completed in the coming year to be similar.

Planned and potential projects, as well as unplanned project processes, are similar to and described in the Aquatic Habitat Section discussion below.

The Aquatic Habitat Section implemented 105 out of 155 planned habitat projects in FY 10 (68 percent). An additional 21 unplanned projects were accomplished for a total of 126 projects. On average, aquatic habitat biologists in each region made substantial progress on 15 projects each. The Department's 2009 annual report on SHP accomplishments highlights some of the habitat

projects. The Fish Division work plans and progress reports for calendar years 2009 and 2010 contain additional details about aquatic habitat project plans and progress for FY 10. The following background information describes how the number of habitat projects implemented annually is determined for aquatic habitat projects.

Potential aquatic projects are identified annually through the Fish Division work planning process. Under this process, regional aquatic habitat biologists list potential projects for the upcoming calendar year and present that draft work plan to the aquatic habitat program supervisor, the aquatic habitat program manager, and fish division staff for review. The regional aquatic habitat biologist identifies projects to meet the objectives identified in the SHP. Along with the draft work plan, a progress report is prepared and presented to staff summarizing work accomplished on the previous calendar year's work plan. Finally, a monthly estimate of hours to be worked by project code is prepared for all activities planned for the upcoming fiscal year. A meeting among staff and regional aquatic biologists is held, typically between late February and early May to review, discuss, and finalize these planning and reporting documents.

The assessments of progress on aquatic habitat projects are drawn from this process and the associated reports. An aquatic habitat project consists of any aquatic habitat restoration, protection, or enhancement activity requiring at least an estimated three-day effort that was either planned during the work planning process or came up unexpectedly during the reporting period. This definition excludes efforts like training, routine coordination with federal, state, and private conservation partners, and providing assistance to other Department programs. The aquatic habitat program manager compiles the assessment of progress for the fiscal year by comparing the activities planned for the previous and current calendar years to the progress reported in the calendar year progress report and the annual SHP report. Since the last six months of the fiscal year are not formally reported in a progress report, other information sources (daily activity reports, monthly summaries) are used to assess progress. A project is considered implemented if the activity that was proposed in the work plan (or the substantial activity that opportunistically emerged during the year) was successfully conducted. The assessment of progress on all of the aquatic projects for each of the regions that was compiled by the aquatic habitat manager is reviewed by the Aquatic Habitat Supervisor and then submitted to Wildlife Division staff for publication.

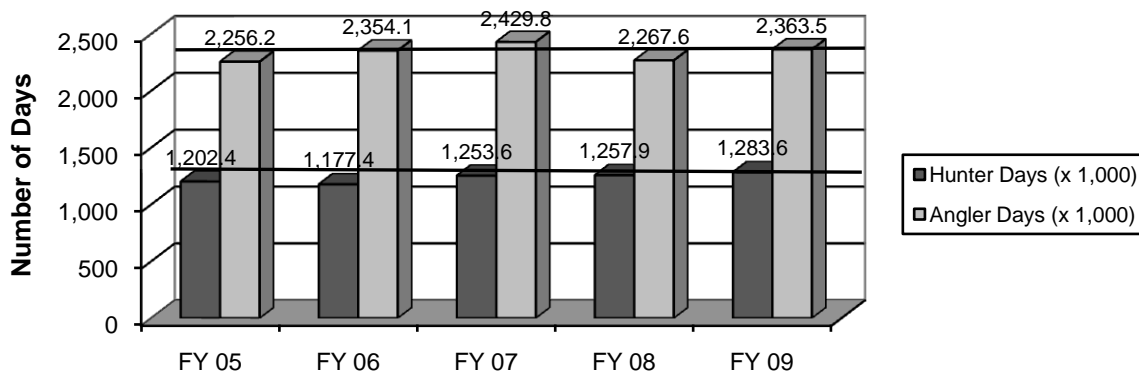
What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

The first step to improving performance is maintaining the solid base of habitat achievements currently produced by the aquatic and terrestrial habitat sections. With renewed focus on priority wildlife habitats under the revised SHP, section personnel will continue to work with land management agencies, private landowners and funding partners to conserve and manage wildlife habitats deemed crucial for maintaining populations of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife for the present and future. The WLCI program in western Wyoming is maturing and may offer better opportunities to address SHP priority habitat area needs and will continue to be a focus. The Department and Commission approved funding in FY 10 for project planning and development. This funding was intended to reduce hurdles in developing and implementing habitat projects. Issues identified included NEPA compliance, archaeological surveys, wetland surveys, and acquiring design and engineering services. Projects developed and obstacles removed will

increase the Department's ability to match the tremendous habitat project funding opportunity inherent in the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust.

An effort to enhance internal coordination, communication and efficient delivery of the Department's habitat management and enhancement program continues to be a focus. The Department will continue to focus on maintaining and developing additional partnerships and expand collaborative habitat management projects. Personnel will continue to develop large-scale project proposals and applications for funding from the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, Governor's Sage-Grouse Fund and Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Coalition, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service State Wildlife Grants, and the Wyoming Conservation Landscape Initiative. In addition, the Department continues to seek expansion of the Habitat Extension Biologist partnerships with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to facilitate implementation of Farm Bill programs that benefit wildlife on private lands.

Performance Measure #4: Number of days in the field by hunters and anglers (Personnel with this program will work to provide at least 1.1 million hunter days and 2.3 million angler days per year).



Story behind the performance:

The number of days hunters spent in the field during FY 09 was nearly 17 percent above target levels. Habitat response to timely precipitation in FY 09 resulted in an increase in hunter opportunity. Declining access for hunting continues to impact hunter days as many licenses continue to go unsold in areas with difficult access. Despite the poor economic times experienced nationally and statewide, angler days improved marginally (four percent) over FY 08, recovering some participation lost when fuel costs cut into angling activities nationwide. The water conditions in Wyoming's lakes and rivers, showed remarkable improvement this year which provided more favorable motor boating conditions following nearly 10 years of persistent drought. Some very popular fisheries in the Laramie River drainage continued to be affected by low water conditions which likely reduced fishing opportunities in southeast Wyoming. In terms of license sales, resident annual and resident daily license sales increased over the past year. Nonresident license sales were mostly unchanged over last year's sales. The rebound in water levels experienced statewide in 2009 should continue to improve fisheries for the next several years.

Since FY 05, Wyoming residents and nonresidents have expended an average of 1,234,974 hunter days (includes the final FY 08 data; preliminary data were used in the 2009 Annual Report) and 2,334,213 angler days. In FY 09, 1,283,568 hunter recreation days and 2,363,461 angler recreation days were provided. Values reflect Lifetime License holders included in the estimate of angler recreation days.

Declining hunting and fishing access is being addressed through the Department's Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) Access Program. The enrollment in each program for calendar year 2009 was: Hunter Management, 917,438 acres; Walk-in Hunting, 665,301 acres; Walk-in Fishing lake acres, 4,891 acres; and Walk-in Fishing stream miles, 85 miles. The average enrollment in each program for 2005-2009 is: Hunter Management, 819,197 acres; Walk-in Hunting, 586,376 acres; Walk-in Fishing lake acres, 1,200 acres; and Walk-in Fishing stream miles, 91 miles. The PLPW Access Program is an important strategy for increasing hunting and fishing access to private and landlocked public land. Combined with public lands that were associated with the enrolled private lands, the PLPW Access Program provided approximately 3.2 million acres of hunting access for the fall 2009/spring 2010 hunting seasons. The Department will continue to explore options for enhancing hunting and fishing access to private lands.

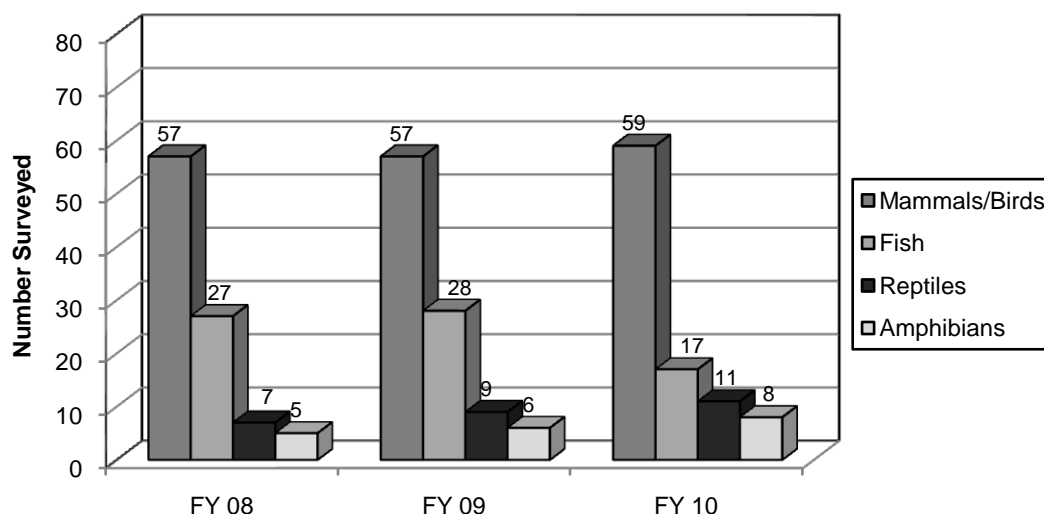
In FY 09, the Department continued to concentrate on extending and modifying existing boating access developments to ensure continued access to reservoirs affected by low water elevations. Major repair of aging roads, parking areas and comfort stations was another major work item for our boating access program. The Department's Fish Wyoming program assisted in enhancing angler access to the Wind River in Dubois, Platte River in Casper and at Gray Reef, the Shoshone River in Cody and several Forest Service fishing ponds.

The Department continues to manage wildlife populations as needed through elk feedgrounds, fish hatcheries and bird farms. Veterinary Services' efforts to address terrestrial wildlife diseases were approved, as were funds to prevent whirling disease in two fish culture facilities. These improvements to fish culture facilities are expected to lead to advancement in disease prevention techniques and allow for greater flexibility in the stocking trout in order to meet angler needs.

What we propose to improve performance in next two years:

- With above normal precipitation during the last few years, water levels in our streams and rivers have led to a recovery of fisheries diminished by persistent drought; this bodes well for future fishing success. As fisheries improve in response to improved habitat conditions, fishing success should improve also. Fishing success in terms of improved catch rates tend to improve fishing participation and license sales. The increased capacity of the Speas Rearing Station has made it possible to respond to improving reservoir conditions by stocking more pounds of trout which should speed the recovery of our popular reservoir fisheries. In combination with improved water conditions this increased capacity should serve to increase angler success rates and angler participation. Changes in private land ownership, which is affecting public access, the primary and secondary effects of mineral development, and changes in societal interests are also compounding the problem. The Department will continue to encourage hunter and angler recruitment, seek ways to maintain and increase access, improve habitat and advertise the opportunities Wyoming offers.

Performance Measure #5: The number of species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) surveyed annually.



Story behind the performance:

The *Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy for Wyoming* (CWCS) identifies 279 species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) in Wyoming (Wyoming Game and Fish Department, 2005). In general, these were species whose populations are greatly restricted or declining, whose habitats may be imperiled, or whose status in Wyoming cannot be documented sufficiently to demonstrate their security. Of the 279 SGCN identified, 54 were mammals, 60 were birds, 26 were reptiles, 12 were amphibians, 40 were fishes, 19 were crustaceans, and 68 were mollusks. The 2010 update of the CWCS is titled the *State Wildlife Action Plan* and identifies 56 birds, 46 mammals, 30 fish, 8 amphibians, and 21 reptiles as SGCN.

The most significant factor limiting our ability to maintain surveys of SGCN is funding. The federal State Wildlife Grant (SWG) program provides about \$600,000 annually to support inventories and conservation of SGCN. Beginning in FY 09, the terrestrial nongame program was funded by the legislature and SGCN inventories and conservation were enhanced with allocations from both the legislature and the Governor's office. In FY10, we conducted 93 surveys for SGCN including 17 fish, 8 amphibian, 11 reptile, and 55 for birds and mammals. These surveys focused on three fundamental aspects: distribution, abundance and trend data.

What has been accomplished:

The terrestrial nongame program continued normal efforts of collecting information on abundance trends of SGCN such as trumpeter swans, common loon, bald eagles, peregrine falcons, long-billed curlew, upland sandpiper, black-footed ferrets, swift fox, white-tailed prairie dog and black-tailed prairie dog. The program also worked on several wetland development or enhancement projects and continued input for the 2010 SWAP update. The nongame program was especially pivotal in providing information and updated distribution maps of SGCN. In FY 09, many new projects were initiated and continued in FY 10. In addition, we initiated several new projects in FY10 that will be reported on in FY11.

- Grants were provided to the University of Wyoming to develop or improve inventory techniques and assess the population status of the Wyoming pocket gopher, Preble's meadow jumping mouse, river otter, pygmy rabbit and other sagebrush obligate songbird and small mammal species. Several of these species have been or are in various stages of the ESA process for potential listing. Another grant provided funding to conduct an assessment of wildlife vulnerability to energy development.
- Along with Wyoming's participation in the national breeding bird surveys, funds were granted to the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO) for expanded monitoring of Wyoming birds, which significantly contributed to the increase and maintenance of adequate data for birds.
- Funds were granted to RMBO to expand efforts for the national northern goshawk inventory in Wyoming.
- Granted funds to Audubon Wyoming to establish grid-based monitoring of birds in important bird areas.
- A grant to the Thunder Basin Prairie Ecosystem Association to establish small mammal baseline inventories.

The state funding allowed for additional seasonal technicians and operating expenses to establish new projects and enhance several ongoing studies such as:

- Inventories and monitoring for several species of bats identified a SGCN
- Enhanced black-footed ferret monitoring and recovery efforts
- Enhanced swift fox monitoring
- Baseline monitoring of nesting raptors in established and potential energy development areas
- Expanded monitoring of colonial nesting water birds identified as SGCN

Results of these bird and mammal projects are detailed in annual reports, available on WGFD intranet site (<http://gf.state.wy.us/wildlife/nongame>).

For aquatic and reptile species the Fish Division has also made substantial progress on statewide inventories by utilizing a diverse array of funding sources and partnerships. Although, the most significant and reliable source of funding has been the State Wildlife Grants program, funds from the Governor's office, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, EPA, and Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative (WLCI) have been used to conduct inventories of fishes, reptiles, amphibians, and freshwater gastropods. These multiple sources of funding and grants to partners are also being used to conduct important applied research on SGCN.

We completed fewer surveys for SGCN fish in 2010 because efforts switched to sampling fewer species but more intensively in order to develop better abundance and trend data. Efforts in 2008 and 2009 efforts were more focused on basin wide inventories. Detailed administrative reports summarizing the results of all inventories have been completed. Following completion of baseline inventories, numerous projects have been implemented to conserve and restore many fish SGCN.

- A grant was provided to the University of Wyoming to determine the impacts of an altered flow regime on SGCN in the mainstem Powder River.

- Two projects funded by SWG will identify the most important sub-drainages for native fish conservation in eastern Wyoming, define best management practices for native fishes in eastern prairie streams, and identify opportunities on private lands.
- Funding from the Wyoming governor's office was used to implement two ongoing projects to conserve native flannelmouth sucker, bluehead sucker and roundtail chub by removing non-native fishes from priority subdrainages. The Department has utilized three crews of contract personnel to implement these projects in the Big Sandy River and Little Sandy, Bitter and Muddy creeks.
- The Wyoming Game and Fish Department has granted WLCI funds to the Colorado State Larval Fish Laboratory to answer important questions related to natural reproduction of native suckers in the Big Sandy watershed. This research will determine whether or not it is prudent to construct a fish passage barrier to facilitate chemical treatment to remove non-native fishes that threaten the persistence of SGCN in this stream.
- A SWG grant was provided to the UW gather to determine the status of roundtail chub in glacial lakes in the Wind River Mountains and to recommend conservation measures.
- The Department implemented a two-year project in spring 2010 funded with SWG to describe the distribution and status of northern leatherside chub and other fishes in the Upper Bear River watershed. Department biologists are also working with researchers from BYU and Idaho State University on projects related to northern leatherside chub in Wyoming.

These relatively new sources of funding have also enable Fish Division to implement a number of projects related to amphibians and reptiles.

- Environmental Protection Agency funds were used by the Department to complete an inventory of amphibians and aquatic reptiles in the riparian corridor of the mainstem Powder River.
- SWG funds are being used by the Department to conduct baseline inventories of reptiles and amphibians in priority drainages in southwest Wyoming.
- A combination of WLCI and Governor's office funds were provided to the University of Wyoming to evaluate the impacts of road networks associated with energy developments on reptiles in southwest Wyoming.
- SWG funds were granted to researchers from Idaho State University and Project Orianna to gather information needed to conserve populations of midget-faded rattlesnake in southwestern Wyoming.
- SWG funds will be used to initiate a WGFD project in spring 2011 to describe the status of reptiles and amphibians in priority watersheds in southeast Wyoming.
- Governor's office funds were used to initiate a WGFD project in the Snake River drainage in July 2010 to describe the distribution and seasonal habitat use of bluehead suckers.

Administrative reports for fish, amphibian and reptile SGCN are found on the WGFD intranet site: http://gfi.state.wy.us/fish/management/admin_reports.

The expanded effort has greatly enhanced our ability to assess the status of those species identified as SGCN in 2005 and ensure appropriate classification in the 2010 SWAP. In some cases the species status is secure and is dropped from the list. For those whose populations and/or habitat are imperiled the Department will implement conservation actions and conduct additional studies. This proactive approach will be Wyoming's most effective strategy in reducing the

chance that a species will be listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

What we propose to improve performance in next two years:

- The Department will continue the annual and periodic SGCN surveys being conducting. Continued funding from the Wyoming Legislature, SWG and cooperative agreements with other entities will allow the Department to conduct necessary inventories and research on the life history of SGCN, SGCN survey techniques, and the effects of energy development and other impacts on a number of SGCN. Such funding will allow the Department to move more quickly toward removing those species whose status can be confirmed as secure, and begin implementing conservation actions for those whose populations and/or habitat may be imperiled. This proactive approach will be Wyoming's most effective strategy in reducing the chance for a listing.
- As noted, the Department has updated the SWAP. The revision includes review and modification of strategies to learn more about SGCN and how to conserve them. It also involves revision of the status of SGCN. The ranking system for identifying SGCN has been enhanced in the 2010 SWAP. All limiting factors are considered in the enhanced system as opposed to only habitat and human disturbance considered in the 2005 system. In addition, a species with a wide distribution is no longer assumed to have a stable or secure population trend. Data are required to indicate a population trends.

Performance Measure #6 - Number of breeding pairs in Wyoming (Personnel in this program will work to maintain the number of breeding pairs at a level that meets the requirements of Wyoming statutes and complies with the Wyoming Gray Wolf Management Plan).

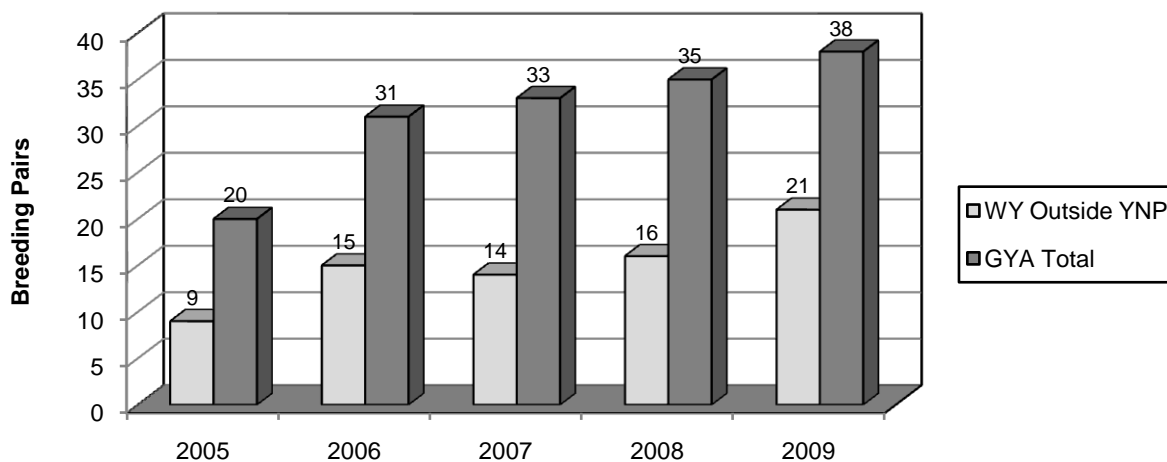


Fig. 1. Number of breeding pairs of wolves in the GYA recovery area and in Wyoming outside Yellowstone National Park since 1995. ("Breeding pair" is defined by W.S. 23-1-304(c) as an adult male and an adult female gray wolf raising at least two (2) pups of the year until December 31).

Story behind the performance:

Currently, wolves are listed on the federal Endangered Species Act within Wyoming. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is the current management authority responsible for maintaining the number of breeding pairs in Wyoming.

Wolves were first introduced from Canada into Yellowstone National Park (YNP) in January of 1995 and again in 1996. YNP is part of the Greater Yellowstone Wolf Recovery Area, one of three recovery areas in the U.S. Northern Rocky Mountains. The other two recovery areas are Central Idaho and Northwest Montana. In its 1987 Wolf Recovery Plan and again in the 1994 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on introducing wolves into Yellowstone National Park and Central Idaho, USFWS defined criteria for a recovered wolf population in the Northern Rocky Mountains. Those criteria included 10 breeding pairs and approximately 100 wolves in each recovery area, equating more or less to 30 breeding pairs and 300 wolves equitably distributed. The recovery criteria had to be met for three consecutive years before wolves could be removed from the federal list of endangered and threatened wildlife. In addition to USFWS recovery goals, all three states in the Northern Rocky Mountains agreed to manage wolves for at least 15 breeding pairs and 150 or more wolves. Wyoming also committed to managing seven or more packs outside National Parks in Wyoming.

The recovery criteria were first achieved in 2000, and by 2002 had been exceeded for three consecutive years in the Northern Rocky Mountains. On July 13, 2005 Wyoming filed a petition requesting the USFWS to establish a Northern Rocky Mountains Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of gray wolves, and to remove wolves in the DPS from the federal list of endangered and threatened species.

On March 28, 2008, wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains were delisted and management was transferred from federal authority to state authority. A coalition of 12 environmental and animal rights groups filed suit in federal court to halt the delisting. On July 18, 2008, the U.S. Federal District Court in Missoula, Montana issued a preliminary injunction that immediately reinstated Endangered Species Act protections for gray wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains DPS pending a final court decision. On October 14, 2008 the federal court granted the request by the USFWS to vacate and remand the Northern Rocky Mountains DPS wolf delisting rule published on March 28, 2008. This placed wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains DPS back onto the federal list of endangered and threatened species until such time as the USFWS posted a new rule to delist wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains DPS.

On October 28, 2008, the USFWS reopened the comment period for the proposed rule to delist wolves in all areas of the Northern Rocky Mountains DPS except Wyoming because the USFWS deemed Wyoming's regulatory framework for managing wolves did not meet the purposes of the Endangered Species Act. The USFWS officially delisted wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains DPS except Wyoming on May 4, 2009. A coalition of 13 environmental and animal rights groups filed suit in Federal District Court in Missoula, Montana to halt the delisting in June 2009. A request for an injunction was denied in September 2009, allowing regulated wolf harvest to proceed in Idaho and Montana. Oral arguments were heard in this case on June 15, 2010. Federal District Court gave a final ruling in this case on August 5, 2010 ruling against the USFWS and restoring ESA protections for wolves in all of the Northern Rocky Mountains DPS.

The State of Wyoming, Park County in Wyoming, and the Wyoming Wolf Coalition also filed suit in Federal District Court in Cheyenne, Wyoming challenging the rejection of Wyoming's regulatory framework and the Wyoming Gray Wolf Management Plan by the USFWS. Oral arguments were heard January 29, 2010 and a final ruling is also pending in this case.

Wolves in Wyoming continue to be managed under direction from the USFWS. Absent a formal memorandum of agreement (MOA), the State of Wyoming and the Department will have little involvement in wolf management except for investigation and compensation of livestock depredations occurring in the Wolf Trophy Game Management Area (WTGMA) pursuant to Wyoming state statute and Department regulation.

Official annual wolf population estimates are calculated each year based on monitoring efforts ending on December 31. The number of wolves in Wyoming is derived from the entire State of Wyoming including YNP. Three census techniques are combined to estimate the total number of wolves in Wyoming: 1) direct observations of wolves; 2) winter track counts of wolves traveling in snow; and 3) confirmed reports of wolf sightings from other agencies. The USFWS defines a pack of wolves as two or more wolves traveling together in a defined home range. A breeding pair is defined as two or more adults producing two or more pups that survive through December 31 of that year. Wolves in packs containing radio-collared wolves are counted using visual observations from the ground and aerial telemetry flights. Wolves are tracked in the snow and different sets of wolf tracks are counted. Observations of wolves are incorporated into population estimates in areas where repeated wolf sightings are confirmed. During the 2010 fiscal year, the Department was not responsible for wolf monitoring following the rejection of the Wyoming Gray Wolf Management Plan in the USFWS Federal Register Notice posted in April 2009. The notice simultaneously delisted wolves in Montana and Idaho, but left federal ESA protections in place for wolves in Wyoming. Currently, the USFWS is the management agency responsible for monitoring wolf packs in Wyoming.

As of December 31, 2009, the total wolf population in Wyoming increased approximately six percent from ≥ 302 wolves in 2008 to ≥ 320 wolves in 2009. The number of wolves in YNP decreased 23 percent from 124 wolves in 2008 to 96 in 2009. YNP had six breeding pairs in 2009, the same number as in 2008 and down from 10 breeding pairs in 2007. Wolf numbers in Wyoming outside YNP increased 26 percent from ≥ 178 wolves in 2008 to ≥ 224 wolves in 2009. Twenty-one packs in Wyoming outside YNP were classified as breeding pairs in 2009, up from 16 breeding pairs in 2008. The wolf population outside YNP increased after three years of stability, primarily because of greater recruitment within current packs rather than formation of new packs (i.e., same number of known packs in 2008 and 2009, but five more breeding pairs in 2009). The YNP wolf population has fluctuated following a maximum of 174 wolves in 2003 and is on a current downward trend. The primary reason for the population decline in YNP was poor pup recruitment which was probably the result of a disease outbreak that increased pup mortality, and more recently, increased competition for resources between wolf packs following elk population declines.

As of July 23, 2010, a minimum of 15 wolf packs in Wyoming outside of YNP had denned and produced pups making them potentially eligible for breeding pair status pending pup survival at the end of December 2010. It is possible that other breeding pairs will be identified as

monitoring by the USFWS continues. In YNP, the number of breeding pairs at the end of the year is expected to be within normal ranges for the past few years (6-10 breeding pairs) depending on summer pup survival.

From July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010, there were 56 verified livestock depredations by wolves (18 cattle, 1 horse, and 37 sheep) in the WTGMA, and one mule and one guard dog were also verified as injured by wolves during this period. In total, \$67,581.27 was paid out in compensation from the wolf management program budget for wolf depredation during FY 10 to 14 different livestock owners (two cattle and one horse will be compensated in FY 11). Three of those livestock owners suffered losses of multiple animals whereas 11 livestock owners experienced single losses. Additional livestock depredation occurred outside of the WTGMA in Wyoming but Department employees did not actively track these occurrences.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

In the spring 2008, the Department initiated a Wolf Management Program. Legislative funding was appropriated to hire a wolf coordinator and three wolf management specialists. Following the decision by the USFWS to remand the March 28, 2008 delisting rule in October 2008, the State of Wyoming and the Department effectively disbanded the Wolf Management Program. In November 2008 the wolf coordinator resigned and returned to the USFWS. At that time the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission voted to reassign two wolf management specialists to the Trophy Game Section and redefine their duties to include all trophy game management tasks. Since that time one of the positions has been vacated. The remaining wolf management specialist was retained in the Wolf Management Program. In July 2010, the Wolf Management Program was placed under the broader Trophy Game Management Program to allow for more effective coordination and cooperation between both programs.

Originally, the Wolf Management Program was designed to address four key issues concerning wolf management: 1) monitoring, 2) management/control, 3) information and education, and 4) research. Following the relisting of wolves in July 2008 and the exclusion of the State of Wyoming in the delisting of wolves in the Northern Rocky Mountains DPS implemented in May 2009, activities are limited to primarily livestock depredation investigation and compensation in the WTGMA. The Department will continue to communicate and coordinate on a regular basis with the USFWS and U.S. Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services (USDA-WS) to ensure close collaboration on wolf management and depredation issues. The future of wolf management and in Wyoming depends largely on the outcome of pending litigation, which is likely to take considerable time before final resolution is reached.

Monitoring: The Department's involvement in actively monitoring wolves is limited. Some casual monitoring of wolves in chronic depredation areas will occur to anticipate whether problems are likely to occur or to document wolves near depredation sites. The Department will continue to track wolf sightings in areas of the state not currently occupied by wolves and will actively communicate with the USFWS to share sightings to assist with USFWS monitoring efforts and population estimates.

Management/Control: The Department will investigate potential livestock depredations caused by wolves in the WTGMA with assistance from the Department's game wardens, other Trophy Game Section personnel, and USDA-WS. The Department will continue to record depredations

occurring throughout the WTGMA in order to document the effects of wolves on livestock operations and effectively administer the compensation program according to Wyoming state statutes and Commission regulations. The Department will communicate and coordinate regularly with the USFWS and USDA-WS on wolf management and depredation issues. USDA-WS will be the primary agent for control under the direction of the USFWS independent of the Department in the absence of an MOA.

Information and Education: The Department will continue to develop and provide factual information to help the general public and other management agencies understand wolf population status, depredation, ecology, and management in Wyoming as requested.

Research: The Department could enter into a MOA with the USFWS in order to actively engage in and/or support new and ongoing research pertinent to Department management objectives such as the effects of wolf predation on ungulate populations and wolf population monitoring techniques.

PROGRAM-LEVEL PLANS

Program: Aquatic Wildlife Management

Division: Fish

Mission: Conserve and enhance all aquatic wildlife, reptiles, amphibians and their habitats for current and future generations. We will provide diverse, quality fisheries resources and angling opportunities.

Program Facts: The Aquatic Wildlife Management program is made up of seven sub-programs, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-programs</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Fish Hatcheries and Rearing Stations	40.7	\$ 4,825,006
Regional Aquatic Wildlife Mgmt.	33.5	2,977,263
Aquatic Invasive Species	1.5	217,251
Boating Access	0.0	1,189,000
Statewide Aquatic Wildlife Mgmt.	4.5	441,844
Fish Spawning	2.7	289,650
Fish Distribution	0.0	168,475
Fish Wyoming**	<u>0.0</u>	<u>50,000</u>
TOTAL	82.9	\$10,158,489

** Includes permanent, contract, and temporary positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

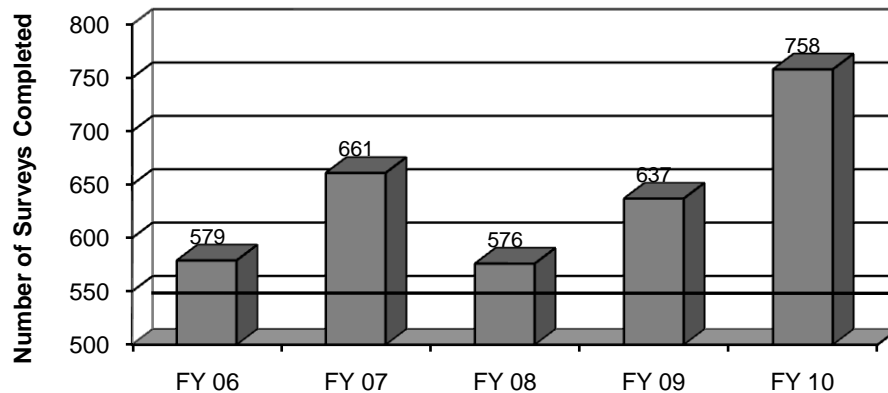
*** One time funding for FY 10 from License Recoupment*

The Aquatic Wildlife program is located across the state in eight regional offices, Cheyenne headquarters, and ten remotely located fish hatcheries and rearing stations.

Primary Functions of the Aquatic Wildlife Management Program:

- **Conserve and enhance all aquatic wildlife, amphibians and reptiles** by scientifically assessing populations at both local and watershed levels, control exotic species where necessary, and where ecologically and economically feasible reintroduce native species into suitable habitats in order to conserve these taxa for future generations.
- **Provide diverse, quality fisheries resources and angling opportunities** through a system of fish management that attempts to first manage wild fisheries where possible, but relies upon an evaluation-based fish-stocking program. The program meets angler desires by stocking salmonids (trout, grayling and Kokanee) that come from egg sources within Wyoming and are reared using modern fish culture practices. Non-salmonid (walleye, bass, catfish, etc.) fisheries are maintained through trades of excess eggs with federal and other state agencies. Our efforts will balance the productive capacity of habitats with public desires.

Performance Measure #1: Number of stream and lake surveys completed (Personnel with this program will work to complete at least 540 stream and lake surveys per year).



Story behind the performance:

The quality of Wyoming's fisheries is a direct reflection of the quality of Wyoming's lakes, rivers and streams. Stream and lake surveys are conducted to determine the condition of fisheries. Until recently, surveys have been targeted towards evaluating the need to change management approaches, primarily for native and introduced sport fishes. Our survey strategy now includes more intensive surveys that emphasize watershed-level fishery evaluations for both our sport fish and native species.

In FY 10, a total of 758 streams and lakes were surveyed. This is substantially higher than the five-year average of 642 surveys per year. Sampling intensity was higher because of increased activity for native species in the southwest portion of the state. Natural gas-field development and potential impact to native herptiles and elevated concern for the three species of fish native to the Green River caused an increase in activity. We continued to survey for native species of concern as identified in the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) for the Big Horn, Powder, Belle Fourche, Niobrara, Little Missouri, Cheyenne and Green river basins. These surveys tend to evaluate habitat and population conditions concurrently, resulting in more comprehensive assessments than previously conducted. Funding through the Governor's Endangered Species Office and General Fund appropriations fueled a good portion of this increased level of activity.

Intensive population estimates that require multiple electrofishing passes through one sampling site were conducted most notably on the North Platte, Green, Bear, Snake, Salt, Greys, Hoback, Wind, Bighorn, Shoshone and Tongue rivers for both wild and stocked fishes. These repeated sampling of the same reach over one week's time with multiple boats and crews only count as a single completed survey. Enhanced water conditions this year provided better opportunities to survey sport fisheries on our major rivers and reservoirs.

The primary management plans guiding fisheries management survey work are called Basin Management Plans (BMP). In FY 07, we changed format and content templates for the basin plans; BMP revisions will provide a goal and objective format for our intentions for our management activities.

The Aquatic Assessment Crew (AAC) again experienced staffing shortages due to personnel reassignment and turnover. The remaining AAC staff were able to direct the work of a large contingent of seasonal biologists that were able to complete or initiate scheduled surveys. A significant number of herpetile surveys and stream surveys were conducted this year by the AAC.

Revision of the Strategic Habitat Plan (SHP) was completed in 2009. As a consequence, we can now more fully integrate SHP habitat priorities into the BMP. Having SHP and SWAP elements in each BMP provides the scientific basis for prioritizing and directing our native species surveys. We may also redirect our effort to conduct investigations to avoid impacts or direct mitigation from energy development in the northeast and southwest portions of the state. Often these are areas where we have limited baseline data but where we have rich species diversity including species of greatest conservation need (SGCN).

In order to meet data needs that were identified for aquatic species in the SWAP, the Department continually surveys streams and lakes. Surveys typically gather baseline inventory or trend monitoring data for SGCN. The continued availability of funding from the Governor's Endangered Species Office and General Fund appropriations greatly accelerated the pace of our investigations for many SGCN.

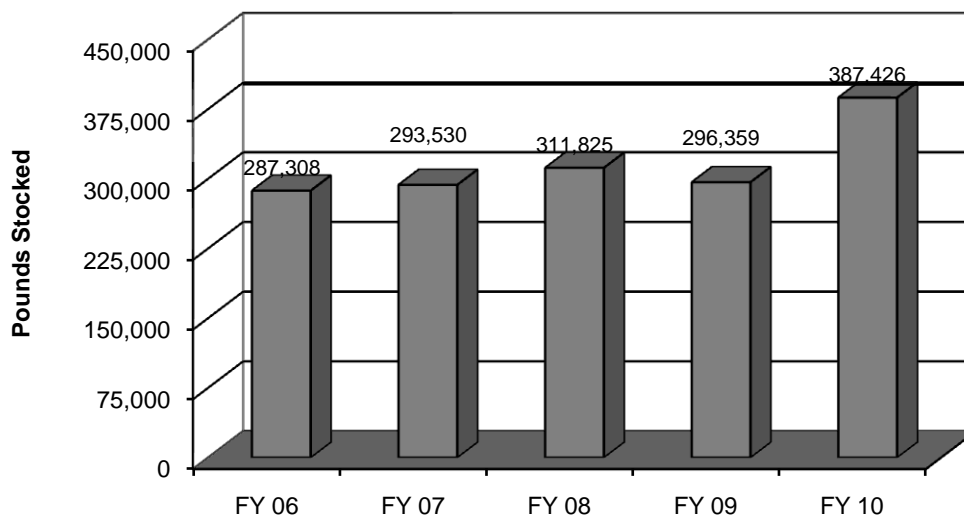
The Department continues to work with the Wyoming Cooperative Research Unit (COOP) to meet continuing research needs. In FY 10, the COOP Unit completed four fisheries studies (roundtail chub habitat use in lakes, sucker hybridization, impacts of flow augmentation from coalbed methane discharge and grazing regime impacts on terrestrial invertebrate input to streams. COOP Unit staffing reductions and the retirement of senior COOP staff limited the number of projects conducted at the University of Wyoming. Some research was conducted in cooperation with Colorado State University. Several projects are ongoing including: hornyhead chub population dynamics, sucker swimming abilities, midget faded rattlesnake habitat use, road impacts on snakes and lizards, aquatic snail survey, aspen-beaver dynamics and impacts on aquatic habitat.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Maintain a full complement of staff on the Aquatic Assessment Crew. When the AAC is fully staffed our performance increases substantially in terms of sampling productivity (numbers species and numbers of streams surveyed) and allows us the opportunity to better balance our sport fish and native species responsibilities.
- Continue evaluating sport fish regulations and our fish stocking programs. Fish stocking evaluations are necessary to assess and update our brood stock management plans and refine our stocking program to make best use of the limited number of fish available. We need to continue to evaluate success of stocking larger trout to avoid walleye predation in our large reservoirs and evaluate our recently initiated Colorado River cutthroat trout and Firehole rainbow trout stocking activities.
- Seek to use partners such as the University of Wyoming or Wyoming Natural Diversity Database to assist in surveying bivalves, aquatic snails and land snails. ESA petitioners increasingly are targeting these invertebrate species but we are acutely short on relative abundance and distribution data to respond to requests for information.

- The acute concern and need to respond to aquatic invasive species (AIS) issues will reduce time that was planned for lake and stream surveys. Public information, public contacts and response for vessel inspection are crucial to restrict or stop the movement of invasive species into Wyoming waters. These duties will be a high priority for our biologists until we can mobilize AIS specialists to handle this workload.

Performance Measure #2: Pounds of fish stocked (Personnel with this program will work to produce 375,000 pounds annually)



Story behind the performance:

According to Commission Policy, “Fish reared at Department facilities shall be stocked only in waters with insufficient natural recruitment where public access is provided, except” in very limited conditions, as provided by policy. Fish stocking thus occurs primarily in artificial reservoir and downstream tailwater habitats with the addition of restoration stocking in native cutthroat trout drainages. Fish stocking is the culmination of a process that begins with egg taking from captive and wild brood stocks (egg sources) and ends with the stocking of the right strain or type of fish into waters at the scheduled time and size. We meet our trout, salmon (kokanee) and grayling needs in state. We also receive, in trade for surplus grayling and trout eggs; warm or cool water sport fishes not available in Wyoming. The eggs are hatched and reared at one of ten facilities and then stocked using our distribution trucks/system.

In FY 10 a total of 387,426 pounds of trout, kokanee and grayling were stocked from Wyoming facilities. The five year rolling average for fish production in Wyoming fish culture facilities is 315,290 pounds. *Myxobolus cerebralis* (Mc) infections in spring water sources continued to suspend all fish production at the Ten Sleep Hatchery and reduced Wigwam Rearing Station’s annual production from an average of 35,000 pounds annually to 9,500 pounds in FY 10. Despite this disruption in rearing capacities, the overall fish production of the Fish Culture program increased by 91,067 pounds (30.7 percent increase), the highest production level over the past six years. The completion of major capital facility construction at Speas Rearing Station was the

main factor for the increase since the station compiled one complete annual production cycle for the first time under expanded rearing capacities.

Warm or cool water sport fishes not available in Wyoming are received in trade for surplus grayling and trout eggs. This year we stocked four coolwater and warmwater fish species including: sunfish hybrids (bluegill x green sunfish), northern pike, shovelnose sturgeon, and walleye. These totaled 2,666,389 fish with the majority being 2,466,797 walleye fingerlings stocked to maintain quality of our walleye sport fisheries.

All statewide stocking requests were assessed and reallocated throughout the system to offset the production losses. While pounds are easily tracked or measured, the quality of the fish stocked continues to be emphasized. This is done by not overstocking facilities and incorporating modern fish health practices that stress optimum not maximum production levels. New rearing units at Dubois, Wigwam and Speas are continually being evaluated to determine ultimate production levels. Emphasis of the stocking program is to release high quality fish for the greatest return when stocking to improve sport fisheries or to restore native trout fisheries. Although adjustments were needed to address the whirling disease losses, the Fish Culture sub-program continues to meet the program's internal goal of producing +/- 10 percent of the requests made from regional aquatic wildlife managers. Coupled with more favorable reservoir pools the stocking of more than 91,000 additional pounds of fish over last year should produce very good fishing in the next several years.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Major renovations of Speas Rearing Station rearing units, accomplished through Legislative funding, were completed in November 2009. Although rearing capacity assessments of the new rearing units continue, fish production increased from the past average of 110,000 pounds to 204,884 pounds in FY 10 under a protected environment with improved rearing conditions.
- Mitigation funds from the Pathfinder Modification Project will spearhead construction of a hatchery building at Speas Rearing Station slated for completion in June 2011. The addition of this building will further enhance the capacities at Speas Rearing Station to meet North Platte River system stocking by developing the capacity to rear small fish at the facility instead of relying on other hatcheries to transfer fish in. Fish production diversity throughout the sub-program will also increase as hatcheries can schedule fish production in space previously allocated for the Speas transfers.
- Funded by the Legislature, the renovations of the Story Hatchery brood stock facilities were completed in November 2009. These improvements have reduced fish health issues; improved rearing and spawning conditions for the brood stocks of lake trout, brook trout, brown trout, rainbow trout, and especially the golden trout - the first successful captive brood stock developed in the United States. An extensive visitor self-guided tour is planned for completion during this period for the public benefit.
- The renovation of the Ten Sleep hatchery is scheduled for completion by June 2011 to remove the whirling disease threat and protect the native Yellowstone cutthroat brood stock. The major capital facility project is a reality through Legislative supplemental budget funding.

- Whirling disease exposure continues to be an issue with the Wigwam Rearing Station spring water supplies, cutting fish production by a third and threatening Colorado River cutthroat restoration. Water supply disinfection systems are being designed to protect the facility with construction planned within the next two years to bring the facility back to full production.
- An extensive capital facility infrastructure is maintained and required to meet stocking responsibilities and maintain captive brood stock populations. Further evaluations are planned for the existing fish rearing and support facilities/equipment to set management priorities for FY 11 – FY 20 under new priorities to augment accomplishments achieved over the previous ten year plan. Planning will emphasize developing a progressive sub-program to meet needs thirty years into the future.
- Continue to maintain and further develop captive brood stocks of native cutthroat species in protective refuges.
- Continue to incorporate and maintain high genetic integrity in brood stocks and broaden the scope and sources of our wild genetic sources of native and introduced trout species internally to maintain a disease free supply for the sub-program.
- Continue to seek and evaluate technological methods that allow more efficient use of available water at fish culture facilities. In conjunction with technology, incorporate proactive techniques to reduce the presence of bacterial coldwater disease and address possible biosecurity issues from other fish health and aquatic invasive species threats.
- Strive to train fish culture personnel in management skills and latest fish culture technologies to prepare for future challenges and anticipated retirements within the next five years.
- Continue development of a sub-program procedures manual for consistency in communications and operations.
- Update existing data generating and fish production database management systems to improve record keeping and communications.

Program: Bird Farms

Division: Wildlife

Mission: Enhance pheasant hunting opportunity in Wyoming.

Program Facts: The Bird Farms Program is made up of one major sub-program, listed below with the number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget.

<u>Sub-program</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Bird Farms	6.2	\$ 685,596

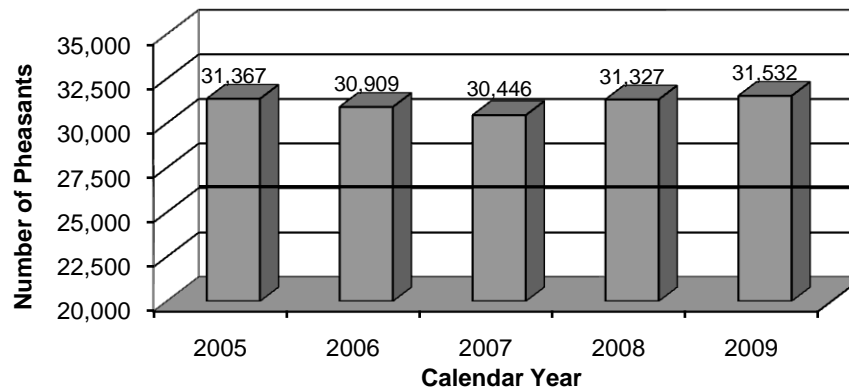
** Includes permanent, contract and temporary positions authorized in the FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

Bird farm facilities are located in Sheridan and Yoder.

Primary Function of the Bird Farm Program:

- **Enhance pheasant hunting opportunity in Wyoming** *through* the production and release of high quality pheasants.

Performance Measure #1: Number of pheasants released annually (Personnel with this program will work to release 25,000 pheasants each year).



Story behind the performance:

Due to continued loss of pheasant habitat in Wyoming and increased demand for pheasant hunting, pheasants being produced at the Department Bird Farms have become an important part of the hunters' "bag" in recent years. Continuing drought, poor habitat conditions and stable or increasing demand for pheasant hunting will result in continued demand into the future. Pheasants have been produced for recreational hunting at the Sheridan facility since 1937 and the Yoder facility since 1963. Annual bird production and survival is related to weather conditions including losses from occasional hail, snowstorms and excessive heat that may slow the growth of young pheasants. Bird farm personnel coordinate release schedules with regional personnel to maximize the efficiency of bird distribution during the months of October, November and December of each year. The vast majority of Wyoming's pheasant hunting occurs in Goshen County in the southeastern part of the state. Established pheasants throughout the state are supplemented by releases from the Department's Downar and Sheridan Bird Farms.

Between 2005 and 2009, the number of pheasants released ranged from 30,909 to 31,532, with the average being 31,116 pheasants. The number released in calendar year 2009, was higher than the average at 31,532. Pheasants were released on Department lands, private lands enrolled in the Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) Access program, and private lands where landowners allow public hunting access.

Personnel at Sheridan Bird Farm continued to do facility upgrades to maximize efficiency in pheasant production. Personnel actively assist region personnel with check stations, chronic wasting disease monitoring, fish spawning projects and extension services.

Downar Bird Farm personnel have been involved with facility upgrades, ongoing habitat projects on local Wildlife Habitat Management Areas, local extension services and involvement with a

local Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) weed management project. Personnel also help the PLPW program with signing and guzzler maintenance.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Personnel at the Bird Farms will continue to seek the most cost effective and efficient methods of rearing pheasants.
- Efforts are being made to improve the genetics of the pheasants being raised to ensure a quality product will be available for hunting.
- The existing facilities are at maximum production at this time. Personnel will explore all avenues to continue this production level.

Program: Conservation Education

Division: Services

Mission: Provide learning and participation opportunities relating to wildlife management, both aquatic and terrestrial, wildlife conservation, wildlife related skills and lawful and ethical behavior.

Program Facts: The Conservation Education program is made up of two major sub-programs, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-program</u>	<u>#FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Hunter Education	1.0	\$180,960
Conservation Education	<u>5.0</u>	<u>542,944</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	6.0	\$723,904

**Includes permanent and contract positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants. These programs do require statewide responsibilities, travel and assistance from Regional personnel.*

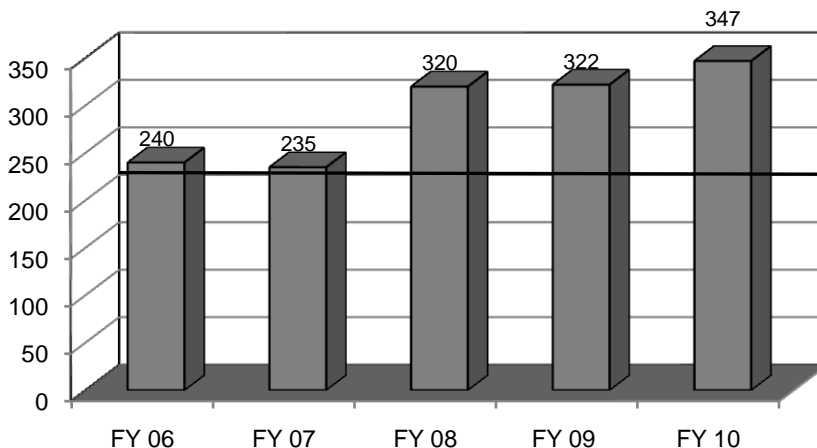
This program is located in the Department Headquarters Office in Cheyenne.

Primary Functions of the Conservation Education Program:

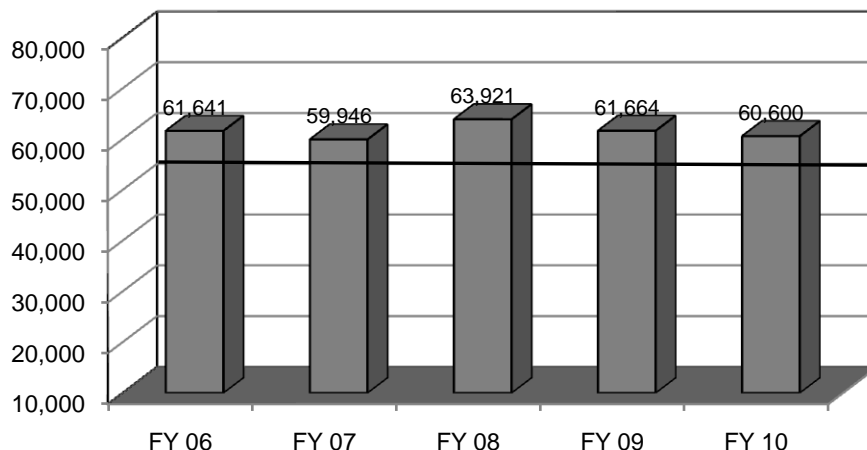
- **Provide learning and participation opportunities** to youth and adults in outdoor skills, and as required by State Statute, continue to offer hunter education so that hunters engage in ethical, lawful and safe actions.
- **Create awareness** in youth and adults of the importance for the planned management practices of wildlife and their habitats within their specific ecosystems.

Performance Measure #1: Number of educational opportunities offered and number of people reached annually through Conservation Education efforts (Personnel from this program will work to provide at least 200 conservation education opportunities to 50,000 people).

Conservation Education Opportunities



Conservation Education Participants



Story behind the performance:

Educational opportunities are offered on an annual basis in the form of Project WILD Workshops, Wild about Outdoor Recreation Education Opportunities (OREO) Educator Workshops, Fishing Clinics held statewide, OREO Youth Camp, Becoming An Outdoors Woman Workshops, Hunter Education classes, writing and distribution of *Wyoming Wildlife Wild Times* publication to schools, shotgun clinics, Hunter Education courses, the Wyoming Hunting & Fishing Heritage Exposition (Expo), and various Conservation Education programs offered in schools and other venues. These programs are aimed at a variety of audiences, including youth, adults, new and experienced sportsmen, women, and others. The number of educational opportunities are limited due to the number of personnel, conflicting schedules, workloads, new and on-going wildlife related issues, number of volunteers, and budget

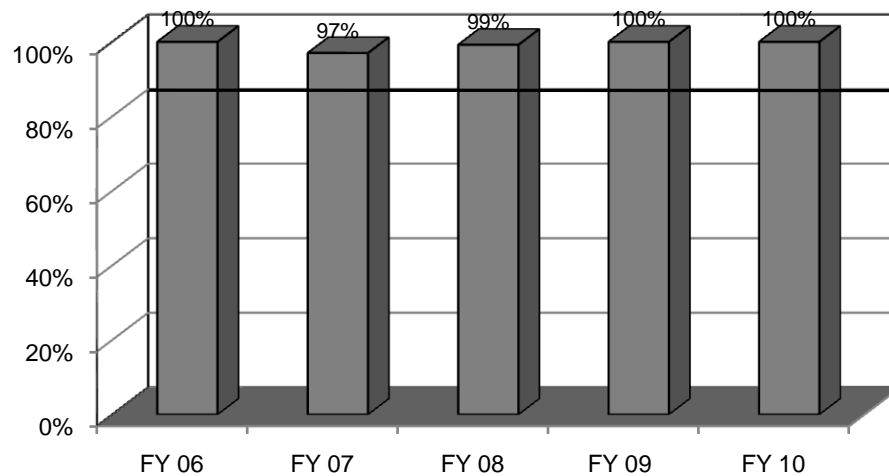
restrictions; however the staff and volunteer instructors were able to maintain the number of program opportunities in FY 10.

In FY 10, there were 347 program opportunities available, which was an increase of 55 program opportunities from the average of 292 programs offered annually since FY 07. This increase occurred because we had staff willing to step-up to fulfill the vacancies left by one FTE who retired. The number of participants in FY 10 was 60,600, which is slightly lower than the three year average of 61,843 participants a year. This occurred because staff workloads were increased with the current vacancies within the I&E section and the need to reduce travel expenses for staff. An example is the reduction in providing in-class programming to area schools, in FY 10 only four in-school programs were given by staff, the staff was unable to fulfill over 20 requests. The staff worked hard to promote and improve program options for participants, thus number of participants per program remained steady or increased. For example, in FY 08 there were 40 participants for the Becoming An Outdoors Woman program and in FY 10 there were 50 participants. Another factor effecting participation numbers was the downturn in the economy. People and schools did not have the ability to travel as readily. For example, in FY 08 we changed the Expo to a Thursday, Friday Saturday event to accommodate more students, which caused an increase in Expo attendance to 13,000. With increased promotion and school recruitment, the attendance at Expo has steadily increased to an average of 13,000 since FY 06. However, in FY 10 due to school budget and travel restrictions, the Expo attendance dropped to 11,976, down approximately 1,000 people. It is clear that continued participation in Department programs indicates that the quality of the programs remains high. Department program opportunities vary a great deal. Some opportunities, such as the Expo, reach large numbers of people for a limited amount of time and with a limited amount of information. Other programs, like Youth Conservation Camp and Becoming An Outdoors Woman, reach smaller audiences for a longer period with more comprehensive information and presentations. Further, our educational efforts must be flexible and dynamic to meet the ever-changing needs of our constituents. The institution of a comprehensive Hunter Education Newsletter is getting more interest and participation in the Hunter Education program, classes, and workshops is increasing. The distribution of the *Wyoming Wildlife Wild Times* magazine has been on a steady increase since FY 05 as more schools and educators are exposed to our programs and resources, there are now 8,700 magazines distributed statewide every quarter.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to evaluate programs to meet the participation needs of the public, recognizing the numbers alone are not an indication of an effective educational program.
- Continue to modify programs to incorporate the Department's priorities.
- Continue to evaluate the Hunter Education program to provide effective instruction and offer a new Hunter Education Instructor Academy to solidify the program.
- Continue to collaborate with conservation organizations, Department of Education, local, state and federal agencies and natural resource agencies, community organizations, businesses and individuals to build effective educational programs.
- When we are back to full staff, we will be able to offer more programs for participants. Until that time, we will try to recruit and train volunteer instructors to help accommodate program requests and I&E needs.

Performance Measure #2: Percentage of participants rating conservation programs as “meets expectations” (Personnel with this program will work to ensure that programs meet or exceed the expectations of at least 80 percent of participants).



Story behind the performance:

Conservation Education programs are evaluated using a basic feedback form filled out by participants. Programs for which this feedback is collected include Project Wild workshops, Wild about OREO programs, Becoming An Outdoors Woman workshops, OREO Youth Camp, Expo, Archery in the Schools workshops, Expo, HE workshops and shooting clinics and *Wyoming Wild Times* publications. For the past few years the evaluation forms for the various programs have not had consistent measurements, the forms simply allow participants to rate the overall program as “meets expectations” or “does not meet expectations” and an opportunity to provide input towards future programming. In fiscal year 2006, the average of participants that believed the programs met expectations was 93 percent. By incorporating input of participants, program formats were adjusted and improvements in satisfaction were realized in FY 07 when the “meet expectations” rating rose to 97 percent. In FY 09 and FY 10, staff worked diligently to better articulate program expectations and meet those expectations for all participants. With this resurgence of dedication by staff to provide quality programs, by FY 08 we were able to bring our overall expectation rating up to a solid 99 percent and in FY 09 and FY 10 we have been able to maintain a solid 100 percent overall rating for participants that believe our programs meet or exceed their expectations.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Evaluate and update participant feedback forms to provide more uniform and qualitative information/measurement that also allows for improved participant response.
 - Continue to modify existing programs based on participant feedback.
 - Create new programs to address participant areas of interest.
-

Program: Conservation Engineering

Division: Services

Mission: Provide engineering technical support to aid in conserving wildlife and providing access with the public.

Program Facts: The Conservation Engineering program is made up of one major sub-program, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-program</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Conservation Engineering	8.0	\$ 663,965

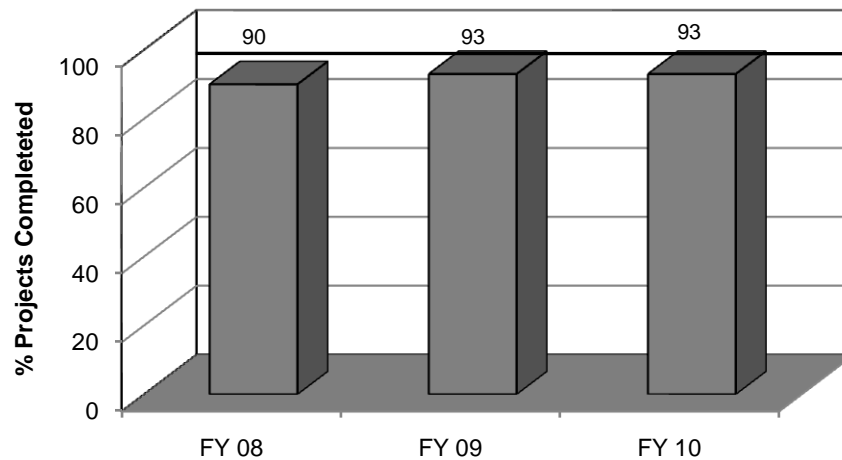
** Includes permanent positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

This program consists of Engineering, Surveying, and Drafting and is located in the Department Headquarters Office in Cheyenne.

Primary Functions of the Conservation Engineering Program:

- **Engineering technical support** is provided *through* engineering, surveying, and drafting to maintain the Department's physical structure of offices, housing, hatcheries, research facilities and Wildlife Habitat Management Areas, boating access facilities, and Public Access Areas often using private sector consultants.
- **Engineering technical support** is provided *by* acting as caretaker of the Department's water rights statewide and routinely making water rights filings for new permits, alterations, or research problems that arise.
- **Engineering technical support** is provided *by* the Drafting section for the Department's statewide signage through design, purchase, and coordination with field personnel and Wyoming Department of Transportation in the installation of said signs.
- **Engineering technical support** is provided *through* the Drafting section for most of the Department's mapping, including herd unit maps, floating access, public access, and maintaining the Department's land status maps.
- **Engineering technical support** is provided *through* the Survey section for boundary surveys of all Commission-owned properties.
- **Engineering technical support** for all major new construction projects is provided *through* the Civil Engineer for design, bid, and construction management using in-house professionals and private sector consulting firms.
- **Engineering technical support** *through* the Drafting section provides many types of displays for all Divisions and some outside agencies for use at various functions such as Commission meetings, the Hunting and Fishing Heritage Exposition, Private Lands Public Wildlife, court displays, and public meetings.

Performance Measure #1: Work with divisions to insure that project requests and capital facilities projects are completed. (Personnel with this program will work to ensure that at least 90% of all project requests and capital facilities projects are completed).



Story behind the performance:

Conservation Engineering provides a service to wildlife and fisheries management employees and ultimately, wildlife and fisheries enthusiasts who enjoy the resource. The program has experienced an increase in workload including major hatchery projects, Regional Office renovations, the Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) Program, and the Hunting and Fishing Heritage Exposition (Expo) added to routine projects. Consisting of a small core of specialists, performance is greatly affected by the number of personnel and the workload. Since FY 08, Conservation Engineering has had a full complement of consistent, qualified staff along with a firm, customer-friendly leadership base, which has improved employee project completion efficiency. Other than a benchmark completion rate in FY 08 of 90 percent, the three-year average has remained above the 92 percent mark, with completion levels in FY 09 and FY 10 reaching 93 percent each.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- With two full years under the change of leadership with a new Chief Engineer, Conservation Engineering was able to implement some adaptive changes and showed positive signs of transitioning into improving the overall number of projects completed. This is reflected in the FY 09 and FY10 completion rating of 93 percent. With the addition of a new assistant engineer as well as consistent and improved communication among Conservation Engineering staff, a high level of performance in this area is expected to be sustained or increased above this year's effort.

Program: Customer Services

Division: Services

Mission: To effectively respond to customer requests and provide guidance to hunters, anglers, and non-consumptive users.

Program Facts: The Customer Services program is made up of two sub-programs listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget. Customer Services is broken into four sections: Customer Services Supervisor, Telephone Information Center, Telecommunications Services, and Alternative Enterprises.

<u>Sub-programs</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Customer Services	6.0	\$ 331,475
Mailroom	<u>1.0</u>	<u>608,404</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	7.0	\$ 986,331

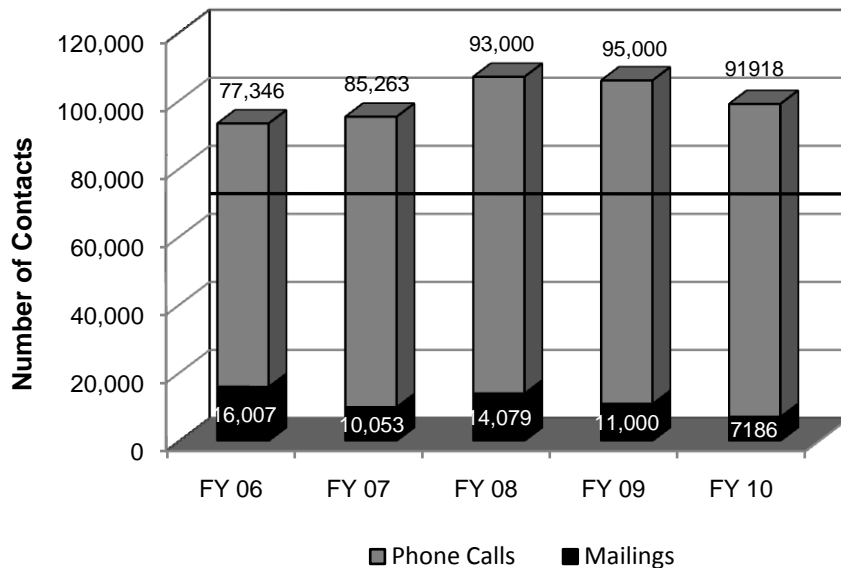
** Includes permanent and contract positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

This Customer Services program is located in the Department Headquarters Office in Cheyenne.

Primary Functions of the Customer Service Program:

- **Serve external customers** by providing regulation and other agency information via telephone and mailings.
- **Serve internal customers** by providing telecommunications, mailroom and staffing assistance.
- **Serve people and wildlife** by offering products and publications that generate revenue that contribute to the support of Department programs.

Performance Measure #1: Volume of customer contacts (Personnel with this program will maintain the capacity and infrastructure needed to address at least 75,000 customer contacts: 10,000 mailings and 65,000 phone calls per year).



Story behind the performance:

The Department's license issuance process, associated statutes, regulations and other responsibilities are complex. A main point of contact serves as an important resource for the customer. These contacts are typically done by telephone although many contacts are also made in person and via mail. Volume is tracked through Avaya's weekly report of incoming calls volume. The mail requests are tracked using a database.

The volume of customers has increased from the prior average likely due in part to Electronic Licensing. The current staff is overburdened with calls during peak times, such as license application deadlines and when license drawing results are made available. A decrease in staffing levels, as expected, decreased the incoming call volume due to inaccessibility and the customer satisfaction level drop.

In FY 09 and again in FY 10, we saw a decrease in mailings. This is partially because of the Department's new procedure of mailing postcards to prior year applicants encouraging them to apply online with an option to contact the Customer Service Center (CSC) to request mailing. More and more customers are directed to the Department's website to retrieve applications and other information.

As planned, the support for IPOS Help Desk was turned over to the Information Technology (IT) section. The small call volume (10-20 calls per week) was easily absorbed during regular business hours, except during high volume days when it was difficult for IPOS users to get through. The additional strain of extended hour staffing resulted in less business hour staffing.

Most calls are currently related to:

1. Online help
2. Application procedure

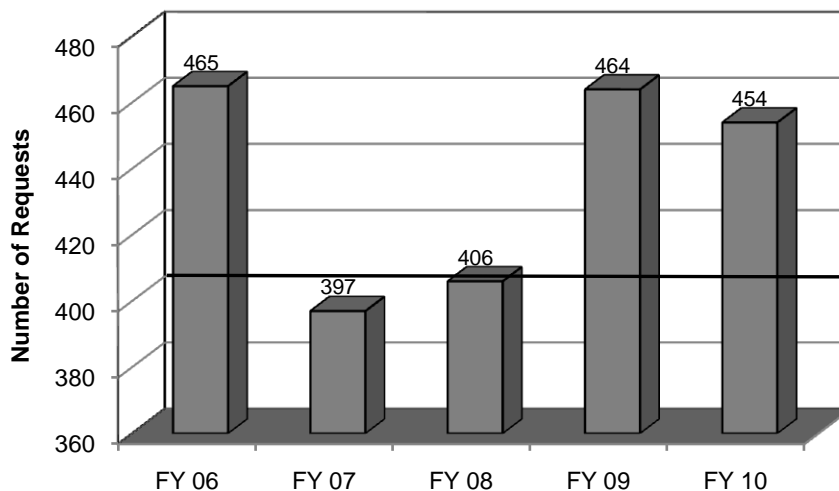
3. Drawing odds, area information
4. Request for regulations, applications
5. Drawing results
6. PLPW program assistance
7. Fishing information
8. Watercraft related questions
9. Alternative Enterprise orders
10. Hunter Safety information
11. General regulations

Since FY 06, the average annual number of mailings has been 11,665. The average annual number of phone calls has been 88,505. In FY 10, the Customer Service staff managed 7,186 mailings and over 91,000 phone calls. The mailings are down considerably which is due to redirecting customers to the website.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to serve our customers via telephone and mailings while continuing to assist a growing number of sportspersons who are applying online.
- We will advocate for the customer by continuing to proactively communicate with the IT and Licensing sections to optimize customer benefit.

Performance Measure #2: Number of Departmental telecommunication requests handled (Personnel with this program will maintain the capacity and infrastructure to handle at least 400 telecommunication requests from Department employees per year).



Story behind the performance:

Currently, one customer service employee staffs this section as part-time duties. The employee's main duties include serving as the customer service center lead worker. As the Telecommunications Liaison, this employee serves as the point of contact for Department employees, Information Technology Division (ITD), and private vendors for all telecommunication related issues. This section has been relied on more than in the past due to

the rapid pace of the cellular environment. This is expected to continue as the cellular industry moves away from support of analog cellular service.

The main types of calls are cell phone upgrades, replacements, plan or billing changes, general inquiries, disconnections, and service and repair calls for landlines.

The main PBX switch is on-site at the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) in Cheyenne. WYDOT telecommunication staff is devoted to programming and other service needs of the switch. The Department utilizes their staff as part of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WYDOT for AUDIX, the state's voicemail system. In the past few years, WYDOT's role has decreased significantly and the liaison contacts outside vendors through Department of Administration and Information (DA&I), specifically, ITD, for telecommunication needs. Work orders are submitted through Telemaster Software for cellular needs, construction or telecommunication equipment requests.

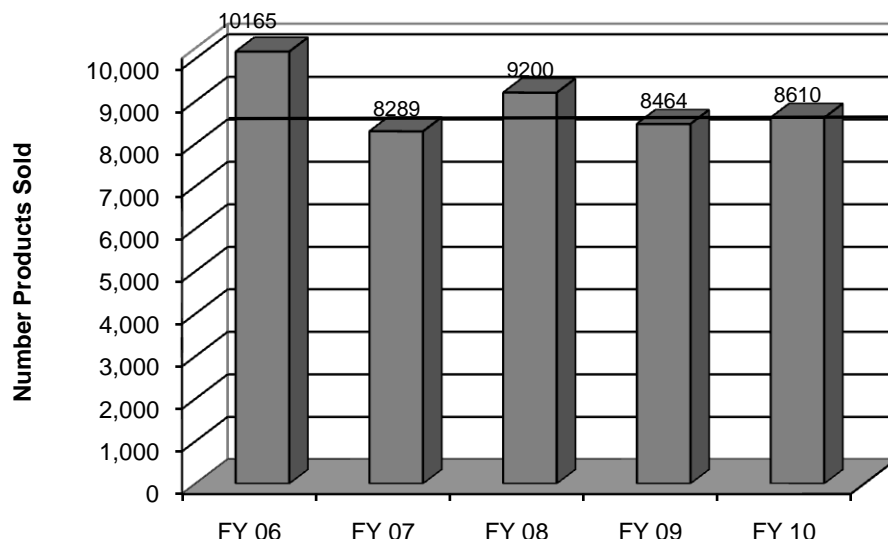
The ITD help desk is contacted for troubleshooting phone issues throughout the state. The Basic Call Management System (BCMS) is used to make changes to phone displays, and other minor changes to phones and features.

In FY 10, the number of telecommunication requests from Department employees was 454. The number of work orders submitted to ITD via Telemaster Software was 276.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- On-going training of the Telecommunications Liaison on Avaya Site Administration software to increase the ability of the Department to be more self-sufficient by having a person onsite with the access and the knowledge to make minor changes in the Private Branch Exchange (PBX) switch. These minor changes include activating and deactivating existing lines, programming some extension moves, changing telephone displays, cover paths and pick up groups. Due to high volume of incoming calls in FY 10 and the Department's headquarter construction, training had not been completed as of July 2010. This goal has been abandoned due to the future move of the PBX switch to the ITD PBX where onsite personnel will make requested changes submitted by the Department's Telecommunication Liaison.
- In FY 10, as a stakeholder in the Enterprise Voice Upgrade Project (EVU), the Department partnered with DA&I's ITD, Capitol Communications Inc., the states telecommunications contractor, along with representatives from IBM and Avaya. The goal of EVU was to upgrade phone switches and cable/fiber pathways of the state's voice communications infrastructure, primarily in the Cheyenne and Casper. As a result, phone calls between most state extensions in Cheyenne and Casper now dial as local calls, eliminating intrastate long distances charges. In the next two years, we will continue to work with DA&I ITD to potentially add more Department regional offices to this expanding state voice infrastructure as local switch connectivity will allow.

Performance Measure #3: Number of products sold to customers (Personnel with this program will work to sell at least 8,000 products per year).



Story behind the performance:

The products offered by Alternative Enterprise (AE) feature the logo "Wyoming's Wildlife Worth the Watching" and the Department's "Official Gear" line introduced in FY 06. The distribution of products help promote the Department's brand as well as build awareness and approval of the Department's mission and work while providing an opportunity for all persons to financially contribute to the Department's conservation efforts.

The products sold relate to wildlife, the Department, and its programs, so the number of products sold is an indication of how successful this program is at promoting the Department to the public. The products are sold above cost, so an increase in number of products sold will also reflect in the profit generated. The target market includes residents, nonresidents, consumptive and non-consumptive users. The profit generated by product sales is used exclusively for habitat restoration and conservation, hunting and fishing access and other wildlife programs.

Since FY 06, the average number of products sold annually was 8,946. In FY 10, the number of products sold was 8,610. Advertisement in the Department's monthly magazine continues to generate sales.

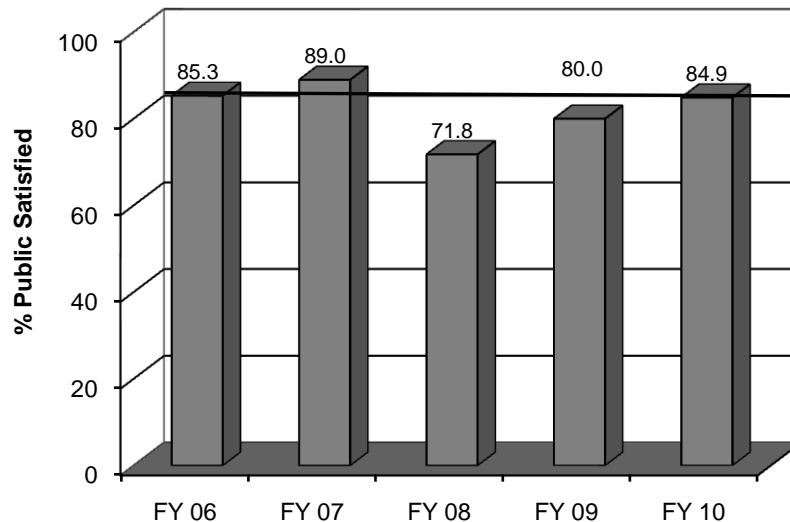
The product sales section is continuing work on the "Official Gear" logo. The Department's product selection process will broaden once we have a trademarked logo to seek alternative vendors. In FY 10, the online store generated over \$30,000 in gross sales from 737 orders.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Identify new products to increase sales and promote the Department brand. During FY 10, products were not available at the Headquarters in Cheyenne due to on site construction. A new gift shop will sell items designed for walk in traffic as well as traditional products geared toward the outdoor enthusiast.
- Identify stipulations for affiliate programs and explore tracking methods

- Accommodate for additional staffing and secure permanent status for current staff when sales increase by 50 percent.

Performance Measure #4: Percent of general public satisfied with how their information needs are handled (Personnel with this program will work to ensure that at least 80% of the public are satisfied with how their information needs are handled).



Story behind the performance:

The Customer Service Center staff is often the only contact the customer has with the Department until they meet a warden or biologist in the field. Their opinion of the Department and the Department's credibility are formed as a result of the contact. The information given to hunters and anglers by the customer service representative needs to be accurate, current and communicated in a professional manner.

Annually, the External Client Satisfaction survey is distributed to randomly selected members of the public who had purchased hunting and fishing licenses the previous year. The survey provides the opportunity for the public to measure the performance of select Department programs. Since FY 06, an average of 83.2 percent of the public who had interacted with the CSC staff were satisfied with how their information needs were handled. These needs often included questions related to the online application process, drawing odds, requests for forms and other website navigation assistance. Annually, the percent of the public who were satisfied ranged from 71.8 percent (FY 08) to 89.0 percent (FY 07). When the number of residents who utilize the CSC services is compared to nonresidents, we find that between FY 02-FY 04, more nonresidents utilized our services (annual average of sample: 68 residents vs. 160 nonresidents). Beginning in FY 05, the number of residents that utilized the services surpassed the number of nonresidents. This increase in use by residents is likely due to a change in the preference point system and more department media attention. In regard to satisfaction levels, the percent of people satisfied was slightly higher among nonresidents in each year, and FY 10 was no exception with 79.9 percent of residents and 91 percent nonresidents indicating they were satisfied. While nonresidents typically require assistance filling out their applications, resident

callers respond to media reports or issues that surpass the general information provided by CSC staff.

We see an overall increase in satisfaction in FY 10. This is likely due to staffing levels. While the CSC staff can handle approximately 500 calls per day, during high peaks customers are unable to get an available representative resulting in long waits in the queue system, which instructs via recording to wait for next available agent.

Program: Department Administration

Division: Office of the Director

Mission: Provide leadership for wildlife conservation in Wyoming.

Program Facts:

The Department Administration program is made up of three major sub-programs, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-program</u>	<u>#FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Office of the Director	5.0	\$ 887,062
Commission	0.8	112,307
Division Administration	17.1	2,336,853
Policy and Development	1.0	175,090
Wildlife Heritage Foundation	<u>0.0</u>	<u>282,065</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	23.9	\$ 3,793,377

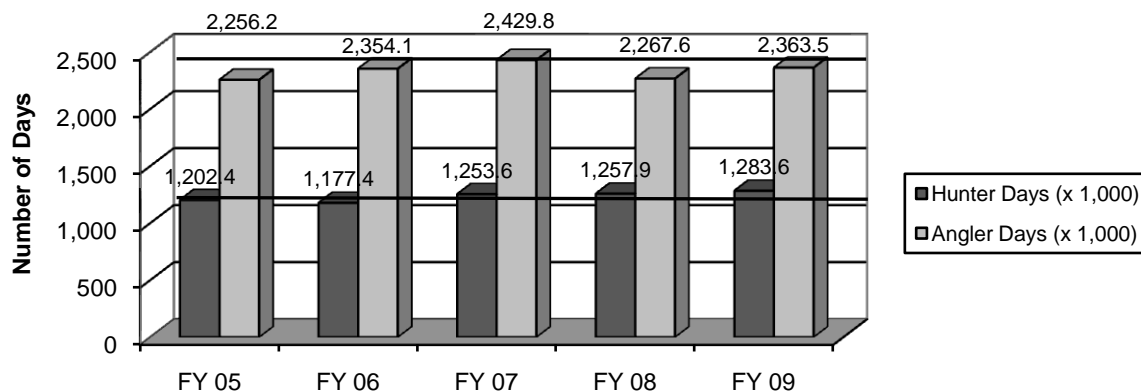
**Includes permanent, contract and temporary positions authorized in the FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

This program is located in the Department Headquarters Office in Cheyenne.

Primary Functions of the Department Administration program:

- **Provide leadership for wildlife conservation in Wyoming** by establishing strategic direction, empowering people, aligning Department programs and systems, and modeling high personal and professional integrity.
- **Serve people** by advocating for wildlife, coordinating with entities and representing the people of Wyoming as stewards of their wildlife resources.
- **Provide policy-level support for wildlife** by implementing the policies and decisions of the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission regarding wildlife and wildlife habitat management, including scientific data collection, law enforcement, wildlife/human conflict management, research, habitat conservation and wildlife health services.

Performance Measure #1: Number of days in the field by hunters and anglers (Personnel with this program will work to provide at least 1.1 million hunter days and 2.3 million angler days per year).



Story behind the performance:

The number of days hunters spent in the field during FY 09 was nearly 17 percent above target levels. Habitat response to timely precipitation in FY 09 resulted in an increase in hunter opportunity. Declining access for hunting continues to impact hunter days as many licenses continue to go unsold in areas with difficult access. Despite the poor economic times experienced nationally and statewide, angler days improved marginally (four percent) over FY 08, recovering some participation lost when fuel costs cut into angling activities nationwide. The water conditions in Wyoming's lakes and rivers, showed remarkable improvement this year which provided more favorable motor boating conditions following nearly 10 years of persistent drought. Some very popular fisheries in the Laramie River drainage continued to be affected by low water conditions which likely reduced fishing opportunities in southeast Wyoming. In terms of license sales, resident annual and resident daily license sales increased over the past year. Nonresident license sales were mostly unchanged over last year's sales. The rebound in water levels experienced statewide in 2009 should continue to improve fisheries for the next several years.

Since FY 05, Wyoming residents and nonresidents have expended an average of 1,234,974 hunter days (includes the final FY 08 data; preliminary data were used in the 2009 Annual Report) and 2,334,213 angler days. In FY 09, 1,283,568 hunter recreation days and 2,363,461 angler recreation days were provided. Values reflect Lifetime License holders included in the estimate of angler recreation days.

Declining hunting and fishing access is being addressed through the Department's Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) Access Program. The enrollment in each program for calendar year 2009 was: Hunter Management, 917,438 acres; Walk-in Hunting, 665,301 acres; Walk-in Fishing lake acres, 4,891 acres; and Walk-in Fishing stream miles, 85 miles. The average enrollment in each program for 2005-2009 is: Hunter Management, 819,197 acres; Walk-in Hunting, 586,376 acres; Walk-in Fishing lake acres, 1,200 acres; and Walk-in Fishing stream miles, 91 miles. The PLPW Access Program is an important strategy for increasing hunting and fishing access to private and landlocked public land. Combined with public lands that were associated with the enrolled private lands, the PLPW Access Program provided approximately

3.2 million acres of hunting access for the fall 2009/spring 2010 hunting seasons. The Department will continue to explore options for enhancing hunting and fishing access to private lands.

In FY 09, the Department continued to concentrate on extending and modifying existing boating access developments to ensure continued access to reservoirs affected by low water elevations. Major repair of aging roads, parking areas and comfort stations was another major work item for our boating access program. The Department's Fish Wyoming program assisted in enhancing angler access to the Wind River in Dubois, Platte River in Casper and at Gray Reef, the Shoshone River in Cody and several Forest Service fishing ponds.

The Department continues to manage wildlife populations as needed through elk feedgrounds, fish hatcheries and bird farms. Veterinary Services' efforts to address terrestrial wildlife diseases were approved, as were funds to prevent whirling disease in two fish culture facilities. These improvements to fish culture facilities are expected to lead to advancement in disease prevention techniques and allow for greater flexibility in the stocking trout in order to meet angler needs.

What we propose to improve performance in next two years:

- With above normal precipitation during the last few years, water levels in our streams and rivers have led to a recovery of fisheries diminished by persistent drought; this bodes well for future fishing success. As fisheries improve in response to improved habitat conditions, fishing success should improve also. Fishing success in terms of improved catch rates tend to improve fishing participation and license sales. The increased capacity of the Speas Rearing Station has made it possible to respond to improving reservoir conditions by stocking more pounds of trout which should speed the recovery of our popular reservoir fisheries. In combination with improved water conditions this increased capacity should serve to increase angler success rates and angler participation. Changes in private land ownership, which is affecting public access, the primary and secondary effects of mineral development, and changes in societal interests are also compounding the problem. The Department will continue to encourage hunter and angler recruitment, seek ways to maintain and increase access, improve habitat and advertise the opportunities Wyoming offers.

Program: External Research

Division: Office of the Director

Mission: Conduct timely, applied research on fish and wildlife management issues.

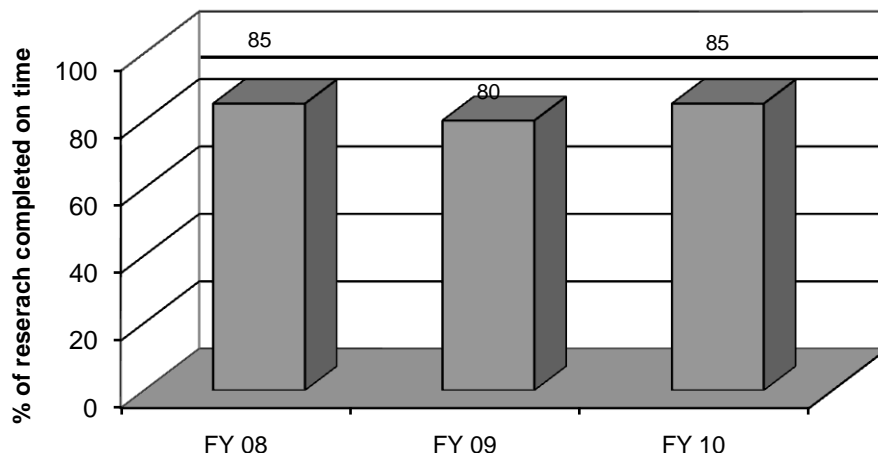
Program Facts: Scientific investigations are typically conducted by researchers associated with the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, universities and independent researchers. The external research program funds no Department personnel but by agreement, \$40,000 per year is used to help fund administration of the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit; listed below is the 2010 (FY 10) budget:

Sub-program	# FTEs	2010 Annual Budget
External Research/ Coop	0	\$ 608,496

Primary Functions of the External Research Program:

- **Conduct research to provide answers to wildlife management questions or issues that require rigorous, scientific study** by developing research proposals and budgets in cooperation with the Department, hiring and overseeing researchers and/or graduate students to conduct research that is designed to have immediate application by fish and wildlife managers.

Performance Measure #1: The percentage of funded projects that submit a final report within specified terms of the grant. (Personnel in this program will work to submit 90% of reports within terms of the grant).



Story behind the performance:

The Department is responsible for developing proposals for applied research projects to improve future management of Wyoming's wildlife resources. However, with increased costs associated with conducting research, Department personnel develop the applied research projects in cooperation with the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit (Coop Unit) and other researchers. These proposals are ranked and prioritized by Fish and Wildlife Divisions for funding. With the exception of some wildlife veterinary research, all Department research is outsourced to the Coop Unit, universities and other contracted researchers. Therefore, we rigorously seek qualified researchers to assist us with our research questions. Typically, the majority of the research funding has gone to funding researchers hired or directed by the Coop Unit.

Annually, the Department evaluates the progress of ongoing research and timeliness of completion of research as specified at time of funding. This evaluation is conducted by pooling Fish and Wildlife Divisions to determine if they have received research products on or prior to predetermined completion dates.

Typically most variables affecting the timely completion of research are very controllable. However over the last several years this performance measure has been negatively affected by recent turnover and the failed search for an Assistant Unit Leader for Fisheries. The Coop has implemented a database to track research progress and alert students and advisors about looming deadlines. This has been a prime reason why a higher percentage of deadlines for research projects are now being met. Research from entities outside the Coop has been completed on time. Once the personnel levels and expertise stabilize we expect to meet the performance goal.

In the past several years, Coop Unit staffing has been reduced to Assistant Leader specializing in big game research and the Unit Leader that in preparation for retirement accepted no new fisheries research projects. To address some pressing species diversity issues, the Coop hired an Academic Research Professional to increase capacity for nongame research. Subsequently the budget for FY 10 continues to show an additional \$40,000 to support this increased capacity.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Seek to recover funding needed for applied research in the fields of native species of concern, wildlife diseases, big game, game bird and sport fisheries.
- Support and assist the new Assistant Leader for Fisheries by implementing and developing research projects that increase research capacity in fisheries at the Coop.
- Support and assist efforts to fill the Assistant Leader for Nongame in the Coop in FY 12.
- Maintain increased capacity by seeking funding through General Appropriations or Governors Endangered Species Office in FY 11 and FY 12. Much of this additional funding will be used to contract additional research through the Wyoming Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, University of Wyoming, Colorado State University and other entities. Virtually all of this work should increase our capacity to address concerns addressed in the State Wildlife Action Plan.

Program: Feedgrounds

Division: Wildlife

Mission Statement: To maintain Commission population objectives and control elk distribution in an effort to minimize conflicts with human land uses.

Program Facts: The Feedgrounds program operates 22 feedgrounds and is made up of one sub-program, listed below with number of staff and fiscal year 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-program</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Feedgrounds	2.0	\$ 2,323,446

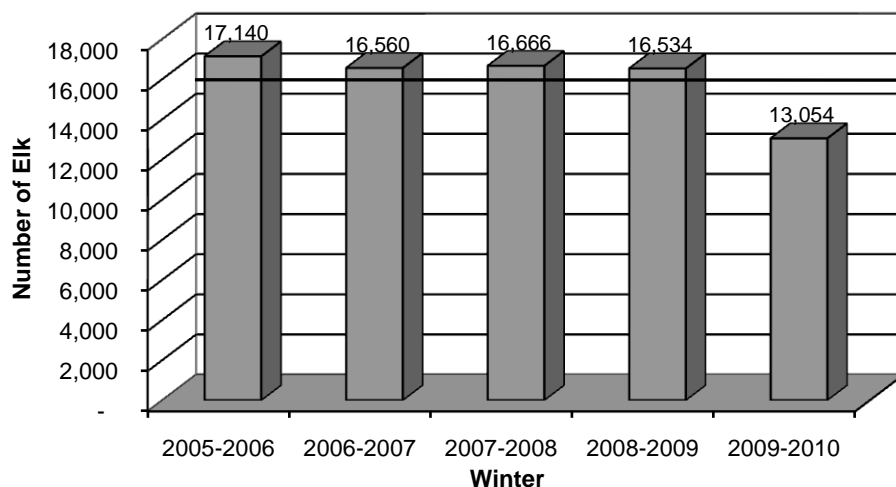
This program is uniquely organized in that it is statewide, but located in the Pinedale region. Personnel are assigned in Pinedale and Etna. The program is supervised by the Pinedale Regional Wildlife Supervisor.

** Includes permanent positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

Primary Function of the Feedground Program:

- **Maintain elk population objectives and control elk distribution** by providing supplemental feed. Supplemental feeding will assist in the prevention of damage to personal property and assist in the prevention of commingling with livestock to reduce opportunities of disease transmission.

Performance Measure #1: Number of elk attending feedgrounds (Personnel from this program will work to feed at least 14,934 elk).



Story behind the performance:

Elk feedgrounds have been an important management tool since the early 1900s. Elk conflicts with agriculture, such as damage to stored hay and feedlines, risk of cattle exposure to brucellosis because of commingling, deep snow accumulations, and loss of native ranges to development significantly impact the ability of elk to utilize native ranges without conflict. During most winters, elk feedgrounds maintain a significant percentage of the total elk population, while native ranges support relatively few elk. Wyoming constituents are accustomed to the increased elk hunting opportunities afforded by high elk numbers that are possible because of feeding.

About 13,054 elk were fed during the winter of 2009-2010. This is 622 less than the 35 year average, a result of extremely mild winter snow conditions. Winter snow conditions were mild enough to prevent three feedgrounds from operating this season, including Fish Creek, Soda Lake and Upper Green River. For the second year in a row the Alkali feedground in the Gros Ventre operated for one month. During the last five winters, the number of elk attending the

feedgrounds has ranged between 13,054 elk (winter 2009-2010) and 17,140 elk (winter 2005-2006). In order to reduce damage/commingling conflicts and prevent excessive starvation, about 77 percent of the all elk in the region were fed.

Western Wyoming has been under the influence of drought conditions for the past 12-19 years. Winter conditions during 2009-2010 stayed mild and allowed for delayed feeding start dates on several feedgrounds and no feeding on three feedgrounds. Overall, the feeding season was 66 days in length. This is second shortest feeding season since 1976-77 and is 59 days less than the average feeding season of 125 days. This can be attributed to later starting and early ending dates on many of the feedgrounds and the short feeding season in the Gros Ventre valley. Wolves continue to chase elk from and between feedgrounds. These factors can influence the number of elk counted on feedgrounds and/or fed. All elk herd units, with exception of the Piney elk herd unit (EHU), had elk numbers less than the individual quotas visiting feedgrounds. Again, attributed to mild winter severity, late start and early end dates. Piney EHU feedgrounds were 488 elk in excess of the EHU feedground quota.

Between 73 percent and 84 percent of the elk in the region are fed each year. This is because adequate native range is not available. These elk are fed at select locations that allow them to be attracted to feedgrounds. Feeding at these locations assists in keeping the elk away from potential commingling/damage situations. While elk attend feedgrounds, they are fed adequate hay (quantity and quality) to reduce starvation. Public acceptance for elk mortality on feedgrounds is low. Long-term average mortality from all causes does not exceed 1.5 percent on all feedgrounds combined. Mortality resulting from old age, hunter crippling, wolf predation, vaccination, and elk trapping cannot be prevented by feedground management techniques. Other causes of mortality (goring, some diseases, malnutrition) may be related to feedground management. Feedground managers should utilize available techniques to minimize those causes of mortality that may be attributed to feedground management. Percent winter mortality for 2009-2010 was 0.3 percent, 0.4 percent less than the previous year.

In addition to helping support elk population numbers and hunting opportunities in northwest Wyoming, elk attendance on feedgrounds provides an opportunity to vaccinate elk for brucellosis and reduce conflict with private landowners. During winter 2009-2010, 83 percent (n=2,333) of elk calves on feedgrounds were ballistically vaccinated with Strain 19. This was the second year that all three feedgrounds in the Pinedale EHU (Muddy Creek, Fall Creek, and Scab Creek) were excluded from vaccination operations due to the test and removal program (for further details, see Wildlife Health and Laboratory Services program).

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to work with terrestrial wildlife biologists and game wardens during their winter survey effort to obtain accurate feedground counts to compare to elk counted on native ranges.
- Direct elk feeders during fall orientation briefing to record all deaths and to attempt to determine the cause of death. Continuing to document and identify the major causes of winter elk mortality on feedgrounds is helpful in addressing public concerns and helps feedground personnel improve management efforts, thus resulting in more productive feeding efforts.

- Keep the public informed of situations that may lead to unfavorable public opinion. Feedground personnel, game wardens, and terrestrial wildlife biologists need to be aware of situations that have the potential of causing public concern and take the lead in developing a media approach.
- Be prepared to quickly notify and work with the Department's Veterinary Services program if disease issues are causing unexpected numbers of elk to die.
- Forest Park and Upper Green River feedgrounds do not serve to prevent damage and commingling with livestock. Their sole purpose is to prevent excessive winter elk losses. Feeding strategies can be adjusted at these locations to feed less hay to save on feeding costs and reduce potential intra-specific disease transmission.
- The "Target Feedground Management" plan was implemented on feedgrounds with decreased damage/commingling risk for the second year. These feedgrounds included Upper Green River, Soda Lake, Fall Creek, Bench Corral, Gros Ventre and Forest Park. This plan shows potential to decrease hay consumption, in the spring, in areas with decreased snow depths. Low-Density feeding strategy of the "Target feedground Management" plan was implemented on South Park, Horse Creek, Greys River, Franz, Black Butte, Jewett, McNeel and Scab Creek feedgrounds.

Program: Financial Management

Division: Fiscal Division

Mission: Ensure accountability of all Department assets to the Department's publics, including financial compliance with federal and state requirements and assist in management planning and decision-making by providing financial information.

Program Facts: The Financial Management Program is listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-programs</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Revenue Collection & Licensing**	21.2	\$ 1,895,945
Asset Management	2.5	556,932
Disbursements	4.0	254,910
Financial Systems	<u>1.5</u>	<u>149,616</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	29.2	\$ 2,857,403

**Includes permanent, contract and temporary positions authorized in the FY 2010 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

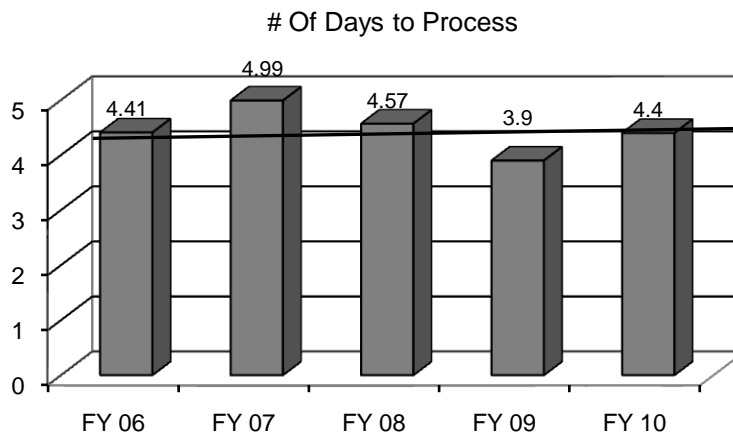
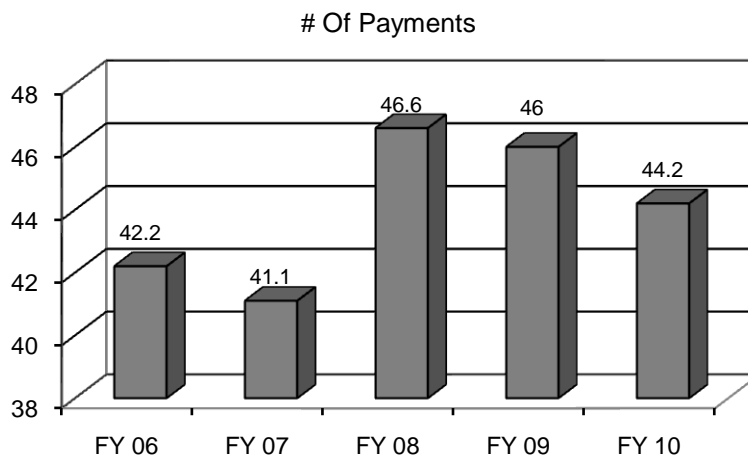
***Includes one ¾ fiscal specialist position.*

This program is located in the Department Headquarters Office in Cheyenne.

Primary Functions of the Financial Management Program:

- **Ensure accountability and compliance** *by* being responsible for billing, collecting, and accounting for all Department revenues and administering the systems to accommodate administration of all Department revenues including issuance of personal hunting and fishing licenses, permits, tags and stamps, watercraft registration, commercial hatchery, taxidermist and bird farm licenses, and federal, state, local and private grants and donations, to include receipts in excess of \$68 million annually. In addition, we initiate, review and process in excess of 50,000 payment transactions in accordance with state requirements.
- **Ensure accountability and compliance** *by* maintaining and updating the financial records of all Department fixed assets to include personal property (vehicles, office and shop equipment, leasehold improvements) and real property (buildings, infrastructure, land improvements).
- **Assist in Department management planning and decision-making** *by* developing and monitoring the Department's annual budget to ensure compliance with state requirements. In addition, we provide monthly and annual financial reports to agency personnel and external publics.

Performance Measure #1: Timeliness of Processing Payment Transactions (Personnel with the program will work to ensure payments are processed within four working days and receipts are processed within 10 working days).



Story behind the performance:

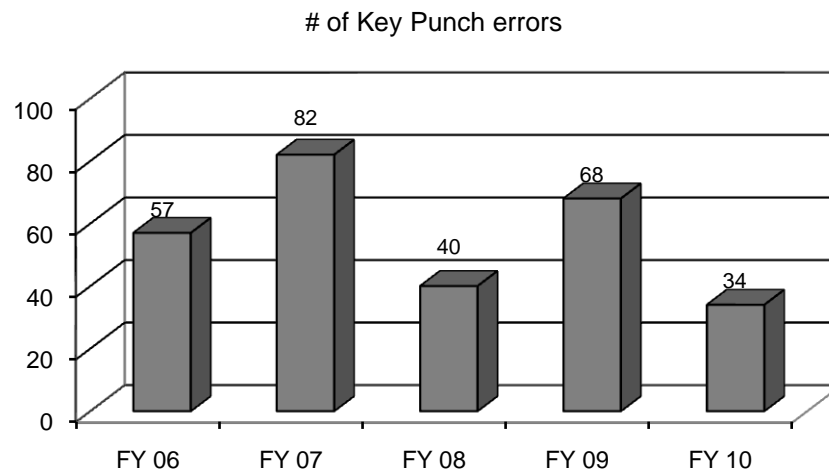
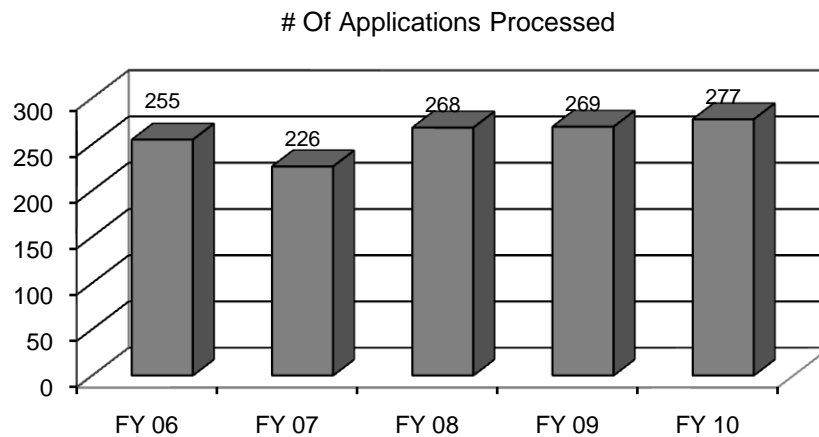
Due to an increased use of the purchasing credit card, the number of actual payment transactions decreased in FY 10 by approximately two percent to slightly over 44,000 annual transactions. However, this section experienced a 33 percent decrease in staffing due to a freeze on position hiring during the summer and early fall of 2009 which meant that only two employees were processing over 3,700 payments per month. When the Division was able to transfer an existing position from another section later during the year, training time still had a detrimental effect on volume as it takes between six months and a year for new personnel to learn state statutory and regulatory requirements, budget structure, Department personnel contacts and internal and external automated financial systems. Accordingly, there was an approximate half-day increase in annualized turnaround time for document processing to 4.4 days. However, in the last four months of the fiscal year improvement occurred and that time was cut to under 3.5 days, once personnel had more familiarity with systems. In this functional area, employee turnover has a significant impact on the timeliness of transaction processing.

In the area of receipts, the Division is no longer focusing on deposit turnaround time due to over 75 percent of applications being entered online with credit cards, receipt and application entry and funds deposit occurs with 2-3 days after receipt for manual application. Additionally, the Division has been able to reduce its reliance on temporary staffing to 2-3 individuals during the majority of the application period, a major change from the 12-20 temporary required only five years ago. In FY 09 a four-day turnaround from the Department receiving mail to having funds processed by the State Treasurer was achieved which we believe is an effective balancing between number of personnel required with interest earned on funds received.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- During the summer of 2010, in the area of disbursements, we completed a fully automated process for license refunds for licenses already issued, and integrated this system into both our disbursements and licensing system to eliminate manual entries and updates to either database. This enhancement should assist in keeping disbursement processing on a timely basis. We will also initiate next year expanded fiscal training for field personnel to reduce the number of payment documents that must be corrected prior to entry due to incomplete data or errors.

Performance Measure #2: Number of External Customer License Inquiries resulting in Department correction of errors (Personnel with this program will work to ensure that no more than 1/10 of one percent of customer license inquiries results from Department errors).



Story behind the performance:

Beginning in FY 07, the license draw section, in accordance with regulatory changes approved by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission, incorporated two major changes in its license draw process. First, Internet applications for limited quota moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat, deer, antelope, elk, turkey and bison licenses were initiated, which resulted in reduced data entry requirements for manual licenses. Additionally, the period for preference point purchases was changed to July 1 through September. These two innovations helped to reduce the volume of manual applications received during the five-month window (January 1 – May 31) during which draw applications are processed. In response to these changes, several benefits to both the Department and hunters were realized. With less manual applications, the number and cost of temporary personnel for processing applications was cut by approximately 400 percent from FY 06. Additionally, due to the decreased volume of manual applications, the number of Department errors was reduced significantly and in hunt year 2009 (FY 10), less than 40 license corrections were required due to keypunch errors out of a total of 277,000 applications.

Additionally, all draws were conducted well in advance of the published draw dates, allowing licensees more time to plan their hunting trips. The replacement of the leftover draw in 2009 with on-line internet capability for purchase of leftover licenses by July 7th and their availability at IPOS agents statewide, along with reduced price doe fawn deer and antelope and cow calf licenses available on the internet and IPOS agents enhanced customer service. Late in FY 10, the licensing section was tasked with a new project with an extremely short deadline, the sale and issuance of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) decals, within six weeks of Legislative authorization. Decals had to be designed and purchased, systems and procedures developed and staff and license agents trained. With the assistance of the Department's IT staff, the section was able to upgrade its system and staff and meet the deadlines of issuing decals through the internet by late April 2010.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to perform quality control by reviewing all applications entered prior to running the draw and issuing licenses
- Encourage applicants through media and mailings to apply through the Internet which has edits to help reduce errors made by applicants in completing applications.
- Annually review suggestions by both license applicants and Department personnel on enhancements to improve the Department's web pages for license applicants and incorporate those enhancements that are cost effective and applicant friendly.
- Integrate the few remaining manual license products into the IPOS system so that all license information can be processed through one data base and all license purchases can be made utilizing credit cards.

Program: Habitat

Division: Fish and Wildlife

Mission: Holistically manage, preserve, restore and/or improve habitat to enhance and sustain Wyoming's fish and wildlife populations for current and future generations.

Program Facts: The Department Habitat program is made up of three major sub-programs, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-programs</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Terrestrial Habitat Management	14.7	\$ 1,908,287
Aquatic Habitat Management	11.4	1,194,154
Water Management	2.5	273,240
WLCI	<u>1.0</u>	<u>0**</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	28.6	\$ 3,375,681

** Includes permanent, contract and temporary positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

***In FY 10 the WLCI was federally funded through a short-term grant. The Department will start providing funding for WLCI in FY 11.*

The Habitat program has incorporated the Water Management sub-program (formerly a sub-program in Aquatic Wildlife Management program). This change and formal adoption of the revised Strategic Habitat Plan by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission in January 2009 provide the direction and activities that guide the Department's habitat program.

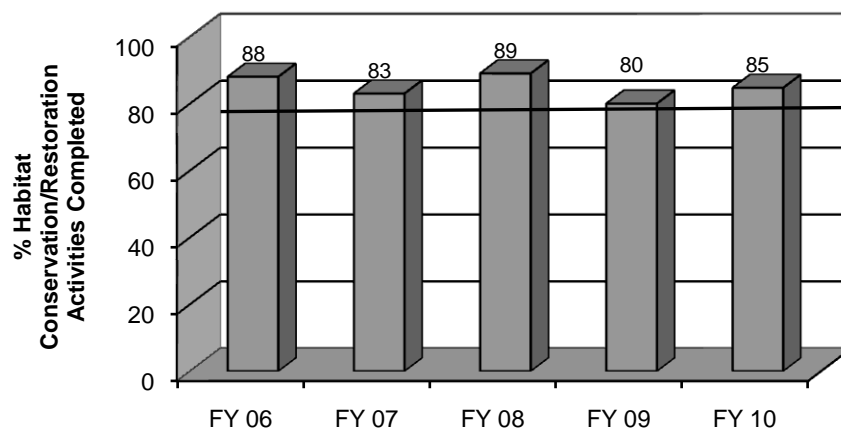
Supervision of the Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative (WLCI) coordinator position was transferred from the Office of Director to the Aquatic Habitat Management Section, effective at the beginning of FY 12 (July 1, 2011). This change increases the alignment of the various department habitat protection, enhancement and management efforts under one habitat strategy.

The Habitat program has statewide responsibilities. Permanent personnel are located in Buffalo (1), Casper (3), Cheyenne (4) Cody (3), Green River (2), Jackson (2), Lander (2), Laramie (3), Pinedale (2) and Sheridan (3).

Primary Functions of the Habitat Program:

- **Enhance, improve and manage priority wildlife habitats** that have been degraded or are important to the maintaining populations of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife for the present and future.
- **Increase wildlife-based recreation through habitat enhancements** that maintain or increase productivity of wildlife populations.
- **Increase public awareness of wildlife habitat issues and the critical connection between healthy habitat and abundant wildlife** populations and promote collaborative habitat management efforts with the general public, conservation partners, private landowners and land management agencies.

Performance Measure #1: Terrestrial Habitat Management – Percent of terrestrial habitat projects and actions completed that addressed habitat conservation, enhancements and restoration activities for wildlife within priority areas and/or habitat types. (Personnel in this program will work to complete at least 75 percent of planned activities).



Story behind the performance:

This measure of habitat preservation or restoration goal is tied to the accomplishments of the Department terrestrial habitat personnel who primarily address Strategic Habitat Plan (SHP) goals 1, 2, 3 or 5. Prior to each fiscal year, habitat personnel develop work schedules and performance goals consistent with the SHP, addressing priority areas and opportunities to collaborate with private landowners, land management agencies and conservation groups. These goals are then tracked individually and reported collectively in terms of accomplishing a percentage of the performance goal completed for the fiscal year. Information is compiled from annual and monthly activity highlight reports, daily activity reports, and annual performance appraisal evaluations as related to the annual work schedules and the annual SHP Accomplishments Report for calendar year 2009.

Tracking of performance goals improves the Department's ability to measure the habitat program success and quality over time, sometimes decades, for long-term conservation and restoration efforts for large-scale landscapes projects. In this way the Department is better able to measure success and quality of the habitat program.

Attempts were made to more narrowly define what constituted a habitat preservation or restoration following guidance provided in the revised SHP, consolidation of projects on a larger scale, working on projects larger in scale and delineating which projects were primarily habitat conservation or restoration versus those that were mainly habitat enhancement or were not necessarily directly related to habitat activities and accomplishments on-the-ground.

In FY 10, approximately 85 percent (72 completed of 85 planned) of the terrestrial habitat goals addressing SHP goals were completed. The increase over FY 09 (81 percent completion) compared to the long-term average is largely a result of new personnel having completed much of the time required for training and having been in the position long enough to develop and improve working relationships with private landowners, federal and state land management agencies, and other partners. Project goals not completed or implemented were largely beyond the direct control of habitat personnel and include weather, sufficient funds to implement the project fully or completion of required documents to conduct activities on federal lands, such as, the National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) documents, other administrative priorities and timelines, and an insufficient number of personnel. In addition, habitat personnel have been asked to spend additional time developing proposals for Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust (WWNRT) funds and associated funding applications to other entities to match the WWNRT funds requested to implement projects. At the same time, habitat personnel are; expected to follow more stringent internal processes and procedures. Last, but not least, unplanned projects, defined as those requiring approximately three or more days of effort by section personnel also need to be dealt with. Planned and unplanned habitat activities resulted in a total of 91 projects completed and on-going for FY 10. Differences in the total number of projects reported for previous years was partly a result of consolidation of previous measures separating protection from enhancement, more narrowly defining what we are reporting (i.e. reporting on projects or activities requiring approximately 1 percent or about three days or more of an individual's annual work time) and consolidation of projects on a larger scale that are directly related to habitat activities and accomplishments on-the-ground.

A partial list of accomplishments by terrestrial habitat personnel during FY 10 is discussed below. Two landscape area projects using satellite imagery land cover classification encompassing parts of the Lander and Cody Regions were completed on approximately 5.5 million acres. Mule deer habitat assessments were completed on about 465,000 acres and moose habitat assessments were completed on about 135,000 acres. Intensive rangeland and habitat inventories were conducted on about 252,000 acres and grazing management plans on about 255,000 acres. Work with various partners and private landowners on conservation easements on 7,700 acres were completed during the fiscal year. Some of the major on-the-ground enhancement and restoration projects included about 18,000 acres of prescribed fire; mechanical vegetation treatments on about 9,600 acres; herbicide treatments on about 12,000 acres; seeding projects on about 1,900 acres; planting about 18,700 shrubs and trees; and assisting several hundred private landowners with habitat extension projects. These projects were accomplished by section personnel working with partners and preparing and soliciting many grant applications from outside sources, including WWNRT, Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Coalition, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Foundation for Wild Sheep, USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Services Administration (FSA) Farm Bill Programs, Water for Wildlife Foundation, Bowhunters of Wyoming, Pheasants Forever, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Private Lands Program and Landowner Incentive Program (LIP), the Wyoming Governor's Sage-Grouse Fund, private landowners and private and corporate donors, among others. Terrestrial section personnel either developed or assisted with development and administered 25 Department trust fund projects, and were directly involved with applications and administration involving 190 grants and/or contracts. Many of the terrestrial habitat projects include development of grazing management plans, working on various internal and external working groups and partnerships, habitat improvement efforts (prescribed fire, herbicide applications, mechanical treatments, fence removal/modifications, seeding, water developments, etc.), wildlife environmental reviews, assisting with large land cover identification and classifications, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Resource Management Plan revisions, and U.S. Forest Service (USFS) plan revisions, as well as assistance on various habitat-related research projects. Finally, recognizing the importance of habitat improvements implemented, personnel annually collect data to document and monitor the number of acres and stream miles inventoried, and document results of management activities and annual big game forage and shrub utilization on more than 250 transects. Terrestrial section personnel expect the number of projects completed in the coming year to be similar.

Habitat biologists have and continue to lose some productivity relative to implementation of SHP goals and projects due to the increasing requests to assist in the mitigation of habitats disturbed from energy development, BLM Resource Management Plan activities, Forest Service Plan activities and revisions, USDA NRCS and FSA 2009 Farm Bill changes and requirements, and internal Department administrative requests. Besides reducing time available for planning and implementing on-the-ground habitat management and enhancement projects, biologists have had less time to seek funding and develop partnerships with landowners and land managers.

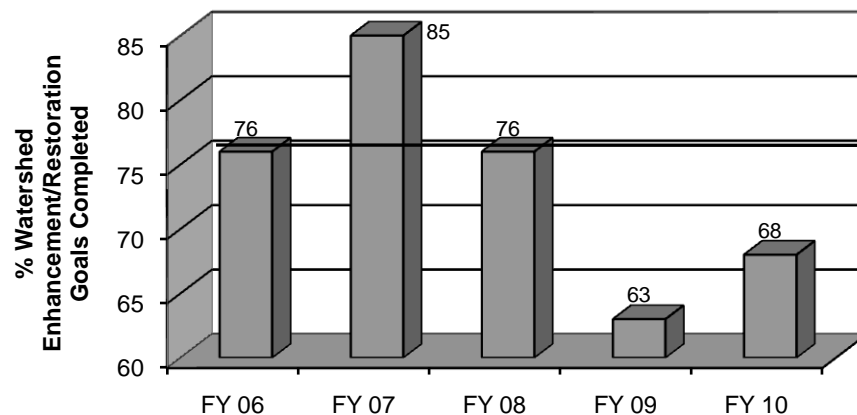
What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to improve efficiency and effectiveness relative to implementing the Commission approved 2009 SHP in priority habitat areas and habitat types delineated in the SHP to

maintain or increase wildlife populations. Funding is provided in existing budgets and through partnerships with other agencies, private landowners and conservation groups.

- In synchrony with the Department budget process, continue to develop proposals to submit for funding to the WWNRT, the WLCI Team, USDA Farm Bill Program, conservation groups and other funding source partners. These additional funds will allow for the funding of more conservation and restoration projects. Additionally, utilize the Director's Office additional funding to accomplish NEPA, inventories and assessments to prepare large shelf-ready projects.
- Evaluate section personnel structure and workload, develop a mid-level field supervisor proposal for Department consideration, and continue to investigate and propose additional field personnel resources including additional interns and longer-term habitat biologist technicians, and investigate and propose additional cost-share positions with various entities.

Performance Measure #2: Aquatic Habitat – Percentage of watershed restoration and habitat enhancement activities accomplished annually. (Personnel in this program will work to complete at least 75 percent of planned activities).



Story behind the performance:

The Aquatic Habitat Section implemented 105 out of 155 planned habitat projects in FY 10 (68 percent). An additional 21 unplanned projects were implemented for a total of 176 projects accomplished. For comparison, in FY 08, 137 projects were accomplished and in FY 09 106 projects were accomplished. The increase in FY 10 is partly attributable to stability among personnel in all positions: there were no changes and in the administrative positions there may have been improved efficiencies in aiding project planning and implementation. Consistent assistance from At-Will Contract Employees hired in the Pinedale and Cody Regions also contributed. In the Casper Region, seventeen projects were not completed due to lack of an aquatic habitat biologist. That position remains frozen under the State Personnel system.

The Department's 2009 Annual report on SHP accomplishments highlights some of the habitat projects. Fish Division work plans and progress reports for calendar years 2009 and 2010 provide additional details about aquatic habitat project plans and progress for FY 10.

Habitat efforts continue to be guided by the SHP adopted by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission in January 2009. The SHP identifies 111 actions to pursue toward achieving five goals: 1) Conserve and manage wildlife habitats that are crucial for maintaining terrestrial and aquatic wildlife populations for the present and future, 2) Enhance, improve and manage priority wildlife habitats that have been degraded, 3) Increase wildlife-based recreation through habitat enhancements that maintain or increase productivity of wildlife, 4) Increase public awareness of wildlife habitat issues and the critical connection between healthy habitat and abundant wildlife populations, and 5) Promote collaborative habitat management efforts with the general public, conservation partners, private landowners, and land management agencies. Efforts are focused in priority areas in each of the management regions and include “crucial” areas essential for conservation of important species and communities and “enhancement” areas, which represent places where work should be conducted to manage or improve wildlife habitat. Implementation and the success of this plan depend on cooperation with land management agencies, NGOs, the public and private landowners. Primary limiting factors identified in completing on-the-ground efforts are lack of adequate personnel to address habitat issues; additional duties reviewing development proposals, particularly those associated with intensive oil, gas and wind energy development; administrative duties assigned to field personnel; obtaining permits; and getting federal agencies to complete Environmental Assessments per NEPA.

Aquatic habitat projects completed include shared agency projects such as diversion rehabilitation projects in the Sheridan Region, beaver transplants, design of projects like the Bitter Creek/Darrel Mumm fishway and the Bear Creek Diversion rehabilitation and screening, construction of the Kendrick fish bypass on Clear Creek near Buffalo, BLM and Forest Service management planning assistance, watershed inventories and habitat assessments, major monitoring efforts, fish passage investigations, an educational fish passage tour, research projects with the University of Wyoming and Colorado State University and other habitat projects. A subset of additional examples is further highlighted below: a project was started toward improving western Wyoming’s Coal Creek habitat by designing improvements to a streamside road. Nearby, habitat in Huff Creek was improved by stabilizing the stream channel with rock and improving riparian willows. An assessment of stream channel conditions was started on the Encampment River. This effort with Trout Unlimited will lead to designs and projects to improve private lands and public fisheries over four miles of stream channel. Similarly, mapping efforts and project development started on the Green River below Fontenelle Reservoir to identify and remove invasive Russian olive and tamarisk. Structures and willows were installed on the Laramie River through the City of Laramie and these efforts not only held up during historic floods of spring 2010 but performed well to reduce channel erosion and protect Greenway pathways. Riparian conifers along Bear Creek in the Lander Region were removed to improve vegetation diversity and health and provide woody cover in the channel. An important tributary to the Salt River in western Wyoming, Crow Creek, was improved on private land and additional improvements are being pursued.

Examples of unplanned aquatic projects include providing extensive comments on a major wind development project in the Casper Region; developing a sill maintenance project on the Green River in collaboration with Seedskaadee National Wildlife Refuge; participating on a Department team to review and provide direction on Russian olive control practices and policy; providing habitat extension to private landowners including the planning, design or implementation of

habitat projects; and providing expert consultations on Army Corps of Engineers permit applications (especially in the Jackson Region).

Significant aquatic habitat personnel effort during FY 10 once again went into providing habitat protection for the Little Mountain Ecosystem by providing information to federal and state agencies and the public regarding effects associated with development and leasing proposals. Aquatic habitat monitoring data and science oversight were provided to the WLCI and biologists participated with local project development groups. Assistance was also provided to the Lands Section by providing information needed to negotiate conservation easements in the Green River, Pinedale, and Lander Regions. Aquatic section personnel and administration tracked and used 15 Department trust fund projects from FY 10 or earlier. An additional 16 new FY 11 Department trust fund aquatic projects were developed. Finally, the aquatic section administered funds from sources other than the Trust Fund for another 17 projects. Overall, approximately 50 aquatic projects involving substantial funds were developed, implemented or administered over the fiscal year. One of the great strengths of the habitat program is development of partnerships and collaborative efforts with private landowners, land management agencies, private industry and NGOs. Section personnel spend considerable time on these partnerships and continue to write grants and receive funds from a variety of other sources, including state, federal, NGOs, and private and corporate donors, which is expected to continue in the future.

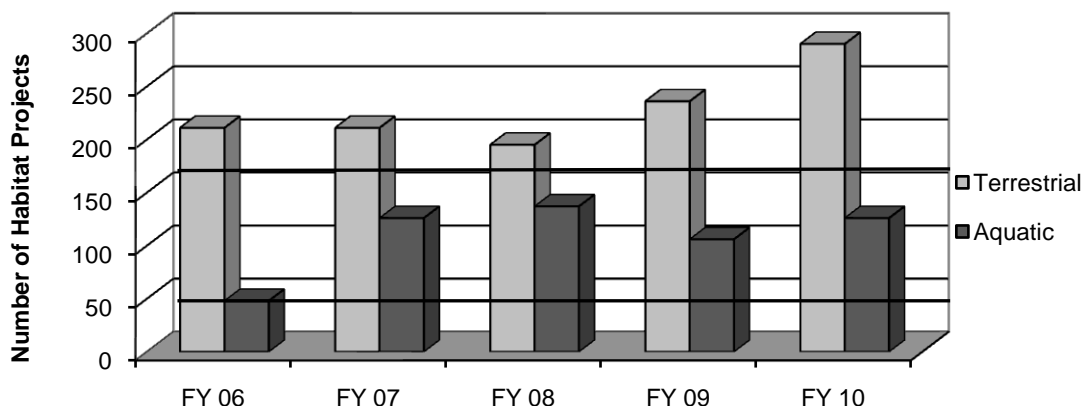
Aquatic projects accomplished include fish passage activities. A distinct budget for fish passage was defined for the first time in FY 10 and is continued in FY 11 and into the future. The Cody aquatic habitat biologist largely focused on fish passage efforts. Accomplishments included working with a contractor to develop final designs and bidding to 1) improve a diversion and screen a ditch on Bear Creek on the Department's Spence/Moriarty Wildlife Habitat Unit, and 2) construct a fishway on Bitter Creek Sidon Canal. A third diversion ditch on Trout Creek, tributary to North Fork Shoshone River was screened and all screens were maintained. Populating a database for storing and prioritizing passage issues on waterways throughout the state remains a significant activity and a contract employee has been pursuing this in priority drainages statewide. Further fish passage work included fish passage entrainment investigations on Bear Creek and the administration of block grants to the Lake DeSmet Conservation District and the Sheridan County Conservation District to rehabilitate and provide fish passage at multiple diversion structures. Finally, the Department worked extensively with Trout Unlimited in reviewing and funding five projects to improve fish passage.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Total projects completed will not change substantially without additional personnel capacity. Therefore, performance improvements must come from continued attention to the development of quality projects that address priority aquatic issues and the smooth implementation of these projects. The first step is maintaining the solid base of habitat achievements currently produced by the aquatic habitat sections. With focus on priority wildlife habitats under the revised SHP, section personnel will continue to work with land management agencies, private landowners and funding partners to conserve and manage wildlife habitats deemed crucial for maintaining populations of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife for the present and future.

- The Department and Commission approved funding in FY 10 toward project development. This funding was intended to reduce hurdles toward developing and implementing habitat projects. Identified likely issues to be addressed included NEPA planning, archaeological surveys, wetland surveys, and acquiring design and engineering services. The contracts and projects conducted in FY 10 appear to be fruitful and leading toward projects; therefore, so-called “project planning funds” were again dedicated toward developing projects in FY 11. Projects developed and obstacles removed in this manner will increase the Department’s ability to match the tremendous habitat project funding opportunity inherent in the WWRNT.
- Efforts to enhance internal coordination and communication and efficient delivery of the Department’s habitat management and enhancement program is an on-going major focus. Last, but not least, we will continue to focus on maintaining and developing additional partnerships and expand collaborative habitat management projects. Personnel will continue to develop large-scale proposals and applications for funding from the WWRNT and other major funders.

Performance Measure #3: Number of habitat projects implemented annually (Personnel in this program will implement at least 150 terrestrial habitat projects and 45 aquatic habitat projects annually).



Story Behind the Last Year of Performance:

The Terrestrial Habitat Section planned 276 habitat projects and accomplished 240 projects (87 percent) during FY 10. Approximately 50 unplanned projects, defined as those requiring more than one percent of annual work hours (three days) of personnel time were accomplished during the fiscal year. Many Section personnel reported partial completion of projects during the fiscal year; however, the majority of these were evaluated as being completed for the fiscal year being considered. Most projects require two or more years to complete. Project components include the initial inventory and analysis, project goal and objective planning, coordination and concurrence from partners, developing and submitting funding applications, completing engineering, cultural clearances, threatened and endangered species assessments, obtaining various permits, granting or contracting the work for on-the-ground implementation and final review prior to showing the project as completed. Factors contributing to uncompleted projects included inadequate funding; delayed permits, such as 404 permits; complicated National Environment Policy Act Environmental (NEPA) compliance processes on federal lands;

concerns or cancellation by private landowners; lack of engineering; higher priorities or assignments from administrators; and weather conditions. A partial list of terrestrial habitat projects includes two landscape scale projects using satellite imagery to document land cover encompassing parts of the Lander, Cody Regions totaling over 5,500,000 acres; mule deer habitat assessments on 465,000 acres; moose habitat assessments on 135,000 acres; rangeland and habitat inventories on 252,000 acres; grazing management planning on 255,000 acres; conservation easements on 7,700 acres; 18,000 acres of prescribed fire; mechanical vegetation treatments on about 9,600 acres; herbicide treatments on about 12,000 acres; seeding projects on about 1,900 acres; planting about 18,700 shrubs and trees; and several hundred private landowners were assisted resulting in many on-the-ground habitat extension projects. Projects were accomplished by Section personnel working with partners and soliciting grants from outside sources, including Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust, Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Coalition, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, North American Foundation for Wild Sheep, Natural Resources Conservation Service Wyoming Farm Bill Programs, Water for Wildlife Foundation, Bowhunters of Wyoming, Pheasants Forever, U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Private Lands Program and Landowner Incentive Program, the Wyoming Governor's Sage-Grouse Fund, private landowners, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Bureau of Recreation, and private and corporate donors among others. Terrestrial section personnel developed and administered about 45 Department trust fund projects, were directly involved with applications involving over 190 grants and assisted on administration of funds on a number of other projects. Many of the terrestrial habitat projects include development of grazing management plans, working on various internal and external working groups and partnerships, habitat improvement efforts (prescribed fire, herbicide applications, mechanical treatments, fence removal/modifications, seeding, water developments, etc.), wildlife environmental reviews, assisting with large land cover identification and classifications, BLM Resource Management Plan revisions, U.S. Forest Service plan revisions, as well as assistance on various habitat related research projects. Finally, recognizing the importance of completed habitat improvement projects, personnel annually collect data to document the number of acres and stream miles inventoried, results of management activities, and annual big game forage and shrub utilization on more than 250 transects. Terrestrial section personnel expect the number of projects completed in the coming year to be similar.

Planned and potential projects, as well as unplanned project processes, are similar to and described in the Aquatic Habitat Section discussion below.

The Aquatic Habitat Section implemented 105 out of 155 planned habitat projects in FY 10 (68 percent). An additional 21 unplanned projects were accomplished for a total of 126 projects. On average, aquatic habitat biologists in each region made substantial progress on 15 projects each. The Department's 2009 annual report on SHP accomplishments highlights some of the habitat projects. The Fish Division work plans and progress reports for calendar years 2009 and 2010 contain additional details about aquatic habitat project plans and progress for FY 10. The following background information describes how the number of habitat projects implemented annually is determined for aquatic habitat projects.

Potential aquatic projects are identified annually through the Fish Division work planning process. Under this process, regional aquatic habitat biologists list potential projects for the

upcoming calendar year and present that draft work plan to the aquatic habitat program supervisor, the aquatic habitat program manager, and fish division staff for review. The regional aquatic habitat biologist identifies projects to meet the objectives identified in the SHP. Along with the draft work plan, a progress report is prepared and presented to staff summarizing work accomplished on the previous calendar year's work plan. Finally, a monthly estimate of hours to be worked by project code is prepared for all activities planned for the upcoming fiscal year. A meeting among staff and regional aquatic biologists is held, typically between late February and early May to review, discuss, and finalize these planning and reporting documents.

The assessments of progress on aquatic habitat projects are drawn from this process and the associated reports. An aquatic habitat project consists of any aquatic habitat restoration, protection, or enhancement activity requiring at least an estimated three-day effort that was either planned during the work planning process or came up unexpectedly during the reporting period. This definition excludes efforts like training, routine coordination with federal, state, and private conservation partners, and providing assistance to other Department programs. The aquatic habitat program manager compiles the assessment of progress for the fiscal year by comparing the activities planned for the previous and current calendar years to the progress reported in the calendar year progress report and the annual SHP report. Since the last six months of the fiscal year are not formally reported in a progress report, other information sources (daily activity reports, monthly summaries) are used to assess progress. A project is considered implemented if the activity that was proposed in the work plan (or the substantial activity that opportunistically emerged during the year) was successfully conducted. The assessment of progress on all of the aquatic projects for each of the regions that was compiled by the aquatic habitat manager is reviewed by the Aquatic Habitat Supervisor and then submitted to Wildlife Division staff for publication.

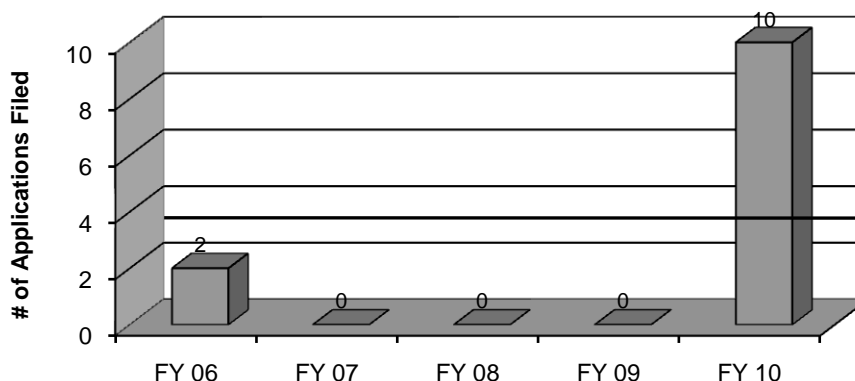
What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

The first step to improving performance is maintaining the solid base of habitat achievements currently produced by the aquatic and terrestrial habitat sections. With renewed focus on priority wildlife habitats under the revised SHP, section personnel will continue to work with land management agencies, private landowners and funding partners to conserve and manage wildlife habitats deemed crucial for maintaining populations of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife for the present and future. The WLCI program in western Wyoming is maturing and may offer better opportunities to address SHP priority habitat area needs and will continue to be a focus. The Department and Commission approved funding in FY 10 for project planning and development. This funding was intended to reduce hurdles in developing and implementing habitat projects. Issues identified included NEPA compliance, archaeological surveys, wetland surveys, and acquiring design and engineering services. Projects developed and obstacles removed will increase the Department's ability to match the tremendous habitat project funding opportunity inherent in the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust.

An effort to enhance internal coordination, communication and efficient delivery of the Department's habitat management and enhancement program continues to be a focus. The Department will continue to focus on maintaining and developing additional partnerships and expand collaborative habitat management projects. Personnel will continue to develop large-scale project proposals and applications for funding from the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural

Resource Trust, Governor's Sage-Grouse Fund and Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Coalition, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service State Wildlife Grants, and the Wyoming Conservation Landscape Initiative. In addition, the Department continues to seek expansion of the Habitat Extension Biologist partnerships with the Natural Resources Conservation Service to facilitate implementation of Farm Bill programs that benefit wildlife on private lands.

Performance Measure #4: Water Management/Instream Flow – The number of applications for instream flow water rights filed (Personnel in this program will work to file at least three instream flow water rights applications per year).



Story behind the performance:

One of the primary responsibilities of Water Management is the filing of applications for instream flow water rights. The applications are the culmination of many years studying the interrelationship between physical habitat and hydrology of individual stream segments. This measure shows the number of instream flow water rights applications that are filed with the State Engineers Office. In FY 10, instream flow water rights were filed for ten different stream segments. The surge in filings was due in part to completion of studies and filings that had been initiated by the previous instream flow biologist for some of these segments in 2007 but had not been processed during the period when the position was filled and the new biologist was being trained. The present instream flow biologist has been aggressively pursuing new filings to meet or exceed the identified annual goal for this aspect of program activities.

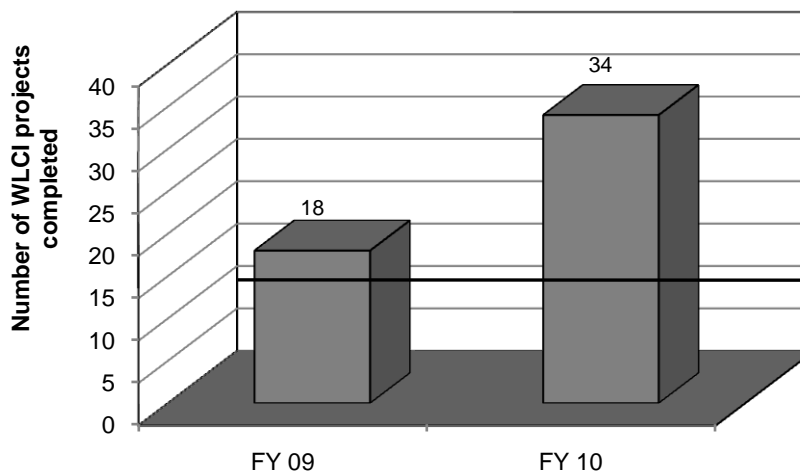
What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to work closely with regional personnel in all Divisions and assist them with water right and management decisions to maximize the ability of Wyoming Game and Fish Commission water rights to maintain and protect fish and wildlife resources as well as sustain the standing and value of the water rights themselves.
- Greater public awareness of instream flow and water management issues is needed. As a consequence, we will continue to provide information regarding the benefits of instream flows to the general public and private landowners via articles in department publications and presentations. Section personnel were involved in Department efforts to improve messaging via the Department's web site. When the Department has a fully functional marketing program in place, we will work to improve the section's web page to help

visitors to the site better understand the accomplishments, needs, and challenges faced by the state when managing water for fish and wildlife.

- The instream flow biologist position has been filled and training will continue to improve the performance and effectiveness of that individual and the section.

Performance Measure #5: Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative - Number of habitat enhancement/restoration projects completed (Personnel in this section will work to complete at least eight habitat projects annually).



Story Behind the Performance:

The Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative completed or continued to fund 34 projects in FY 10. These included projects on aspen restoration efforts, fish passage, wildlife friendly fencing, invasive weed control, and a conservation easement. By comparison, in FY 09 18 projects were considered completed or funding was continued from the previous year. The difference between years is a function of the number of projects being proposed by the Local Project Development Teams, and the WLCI's funding from the federal government.

In 2010, the WLCI, working with partners, was instrumental in the continuing development of the WLCI, a long-term science based effort to assess and enhance aquatic and terrestrial habitats at a landscape scale in Southwest Wyoming, while facilitating responsible development through local collaboration and partnerships. Numerous coordination meetings, field trips, and work sessions occurred (over 16 Local Project Development Team (LPDT) and Executive Committee meetings alone) to help develop projects and identify LPDT priorities. The WLCI coordination team members met with NGOs, permittees, landowners, other agencies and entities to coordinate WLCI activities. Beginning in late 2009, WLCI started an effort to address a Conservation Action Plan (CAP) that will incorporate the LPDTs' areas of concern and the issues involved with those areas. All of the LPDTs have identified large areas with priorities they want to address. Coordination team members are discussing the areas with local managers to reduce the size to reflect what could truly be accomplished within five years. The CAP should serve as a guide to all involved with WLCI to address ecological functions throughout the WLCI area. This is a shift away from shelf ready projects to projects that are more encompassing and occur at a landscape level. The WLCI helped fund 31 projects in 2010; a number of these projects are

multi-year projects that began prior to 2010. The WLCI-USFWS Partners Projects funded eight projects in 2010.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Once the CAP is finalized by the Executive Committee (EC) this document will help to guide WLCI's conservation efforts for the next five years. This document will prioritize conservation efforts on the ground within each LPDT area; it will also aid and direct where WLCI needs to direct their science efforts. The WLCI is also composing a Program Review for the EC members. This document highlights WLCI's accomplishments, current activities, and future needs. One of the items that are addressed is the expansion of current funding opportunities to provide a long-term stable funding source. Long-term dollars build confidence in support of monitoring and evaluating activity for a longer period. A steady source of funding could include integration of agency budgets and priorities, and developing funding sources not limited by timelines requiring annual expenditures. The USGS in conjunction with WLCI's Science and Technical Advisory Committee will be hosting another WLCI Science Workshop. The workshops address what data and information gathering activities have occurred, and what information is still needed by the WLCI community.
- WLCI will continue to fund requested projects; however with the advent of the CAP those requests will be limited since a portion of WLCI's funding will be directed toward the LPDT's priority areas. WLCI will continue to work with interested partners to complete on-the-ground actions and strive to address science needs of local managers.

Program: Habitat and Access Management

Division: Services

Mission Statement: Manage and protect Commission property rights for the benefit of the Commission, Department and people of Wyoming. Wildlife Habitat Management and Public Access Areas are managed in a cost-effective and efficient manner while technical knowledge and habitat development services are provided to the Department.

Program Facts: The Habitat and Access Management program manages and administers Wildlife Habitat Management Areas and Public Access Areas for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. In addition, the branch will complete project requests for other divisions within any single fiscal year. Listed below are the number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-program</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Habitat and Access Management	26.3	\$ 3,152,594

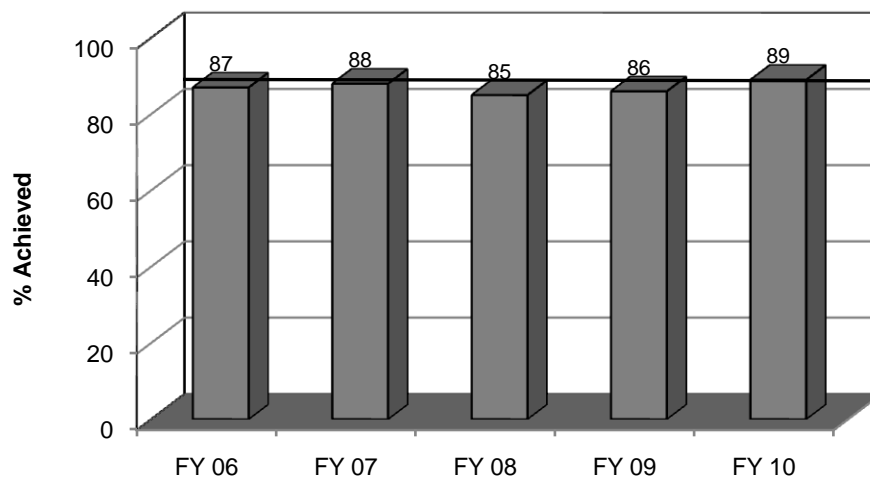
** Includes permanent, contract and temporary positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

The program is located statewide with personnel in Jackson, Pinedale, Cody, Lovell, Sheridan, Laramie, Yoder, Lander, Dubois and Casper.

Primary Functions of the Habitat and Access Management Program:

- **On behalf of the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission, manage and protect Commission property rights for the benefit of the Commission, Department and people of Wyoming** by facilitating wildlife conservation through conserving and improving wildlife habitat on Wildlife Habitat Management Areas. We serve the public by providing for safe and reasonable public recreation of the wildlife resource on Wildlife Habitat Management Areas while maintaining a balance between habitat conservation and public recreation on those lands.
- **On behalf of the Commission, manage and protect Commission property rights for the benefit of the Commission, Department and people of Wyoming** through providing for safe and reasonable public access and recreation of the wildlife resource on Public Access Areas.
- **Provide technical knowledge and development services to the Department** by working on project requests, which conserve wildlife habitat through the Department's Strategic Habitat Plan and increase public recreational opportunities within the state.
- **Operate in a cost-effective and efficient manner** through the balance of private sector contracts and trained Department crews.

Performance Measure #1: Percent of work plan elements achieved (Personnel in this program will work to achieve at least 85 percent of their work plan elements).



Story behind the performance:

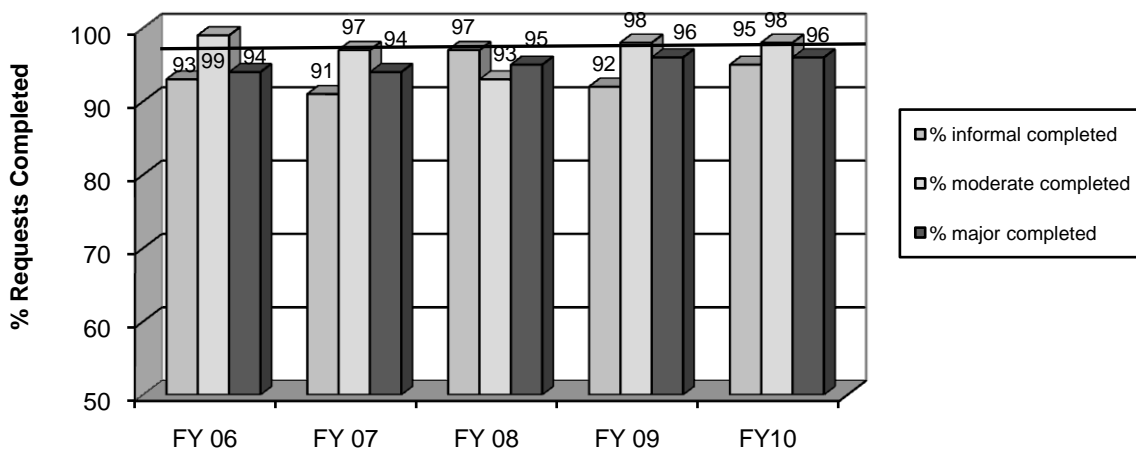
The program is responsible for administering and managing 36 unique Wildlife Habitat Management Areas (WHMAs) and 184 Public Access Areas (PAAs). The WHMAs and PAAs are managed according to the Managed Land and Access Summary (MLAS) developed for each individual area. The work plans are developed prior to each fiscal year in an attempt to address major anticipated needs and requirements of the MLAS for administering and managing the WHMAs and PAAs. The percent of work plan elements achieved is considered to be excellent because the majority of priorities and necessary services (86 percent) are being provided. As

illustrated above, this has been fairly consistent for the last five years and 2010 was no exception. However, there are two reasons that a higher percentage of work plan elements are not achieved annually. The first is the program addresses Department priorities foremost and not program priorities. Numerous higher priority Department projects (project requests) develop after the work plan is completed, and therefore some elements initially planned within the work plan are canceled or delayed. Finally the program has had substantial turnover of employees in the last four years. This has impacted the ability of all program personnel to accomplish work plan elements because of open positions, lost time to recruiting efforts, lower productivity due to extensive training requirements, and a steep learning curve for new personnel.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Concentrate on hiring and promoting quality personnel to help with the long-term stability, integrity and services provided by the program.
- Complete the procedure manuals, which were initiated in 2005 to guide, and assist employees with their job responsibilities, duties and tasks. The procedure manuals will provide task guidance through detailed descriptions of techniques and duties. In addition, the manuals will contain a calendar of deadlines to facilitate planning and preparation. The procedure manuals should be completed by December of 2010.
- Continue efforts to work on Department priorities and not just program priorities. The program must stay flexible to continue to provide the people of Wyoming the best possible wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities possible.
- Increase communication efforts with Division administration by scheduling quarterly meetings to clarify operational priorities.

Performance Measure #2: Percent of project requests completed (Personnel in this program will work to complete at least 95 percent of requested projects).



Story behind the performance:

The Habitat and Access program is requested to assist or provide services for other programs within the Department. On average, 125 (95 percent) of these requests will be completed yearly. In order to track, schedule and complete the requests (project requests) they are broken into three categories: informal, moderate and major project requests. Informal requests take less than two employee days to complete, moderate project requests will take up to ten employee days to

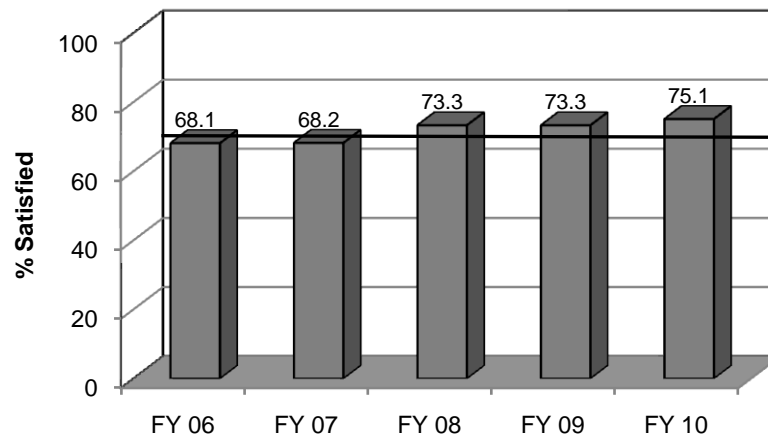
complete and major projects are projects which require more than ten employee days. The vast majority of requests are major and address the Department's Strategic Habitat Plan. The project requests are for assistance or services that only this program can provide within the Department. Project requests vary from large-scale habitat manipulation projects, such as aspen and sagebrush treatments, to minor heavy equipment work on a hatchery.

The percent of project requests completed has been fairly consistent and considered "very good" within the constraints of manpower and budget capacity. The percent of project requests completed has been consistent between 2002 and 2010 with an average of 91.5 percent of all informal, 96.5 percent of moderate and 93.8 percent of all major projects requests being completed. Results for 2010 varied minimally from this average with 95 percent of informal, 98 percent of moderate and 96 percent of major project requests being completed within the year. However, there are three reasons that a higher percentage of project requests are not completed. The first is the program addresses Department priorities foremost and not individual program priorities. It is extremely important for the program to stay flexible in order to accommodate Department priority projects that may develop after the initial project requests are scheduled. Second, in order to accommodate as many project requests as possible, schedules are developed utilizing 100 percent of all possible personnel time. If a project request is delayed, canceled or changed by the requestor, it affects the percent of project requests completed. The final reason is personnel turnover. The program has had substantial turnover of employees in the last four years. This has impacted all program personnel's ability to complete projects because of open positions, lost time to recruiting efforts, lower productivity due to extensive training requirements and a steep learning curve for new personnel.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Concentrate on hiring and promoting quality personnel to help with the long-term stability, integrity and services provided by the program.
- Continue to work closely with terrestrial and aquatic habitat sections to receive more complete information for project requests so that the percentage delayed, canceled or changed by the requestor is decreased.
- Continue efforts to work on Department priorities and not just program priorities. The program must stay flexible to continue to provide the people of Wyoming the best possible wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities possible.
- Complete the procedure manuals, which were initiated in 2005 to guide, and assist employees with their job responsibilities, duties and tasks. The procedure manuals will provide task guidance through detailed descriptions of techniques and duties. In addition, the manuals will contain a calendar of deadlines to facilitate planning and preparation. The procedure manuals should be completed by December of 2010.
- Increase communication efforts with Division administration by scheduling quarterly meetings to clarify operational priorities.

Performance Measure #3: Percent of public satisfied with the management and maintenance of facilities on Wildlife Habitat Management Areas and Public Access Areas (Personnel in this program will work to achieve an external satisfaction rate of at least 65 percent).



Story behind the performance:

The majority of Wyoming residents and non-residents appreciate the efforts of the Department in providing opportunities to access hunting and fishing within the state. The average percent of public satisfied with management and maintenance of facilities is 71.6 percent. The program has received slowly increasing marks among the public for its efforts on managing and maintaining facilities such as roads, restrooms, parking areas, signs and fences on the WHMAs and PAAs – from a starting point of 65.5 percent in FY 05 to 75.1 percent in FY 10. However, neither the general public nor Department employees always understand management objectives on WHMAs or PAAs. Those objectives should be better communicated to the public. In addition, with numerous state and federal agencies providing recreational opportunities across the state, the majority of public is confused as to whether the area is managed by the Department or by another agency. A high turnover rate within the personnel of the branch also affects the overall condition of the areas. The branch has been in a constant hire and train mode for the last several years.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- With the completion of the Managed Land Access Summary, the management of each area will be better defined. An effort will be implemented to educate Department personnel and the public on the management objectives of each WHMA or PAA. This will be done in cooperation with the Department's Information and Education Program.
- An increased effort will be made to better define Department WHMAs and PAAs through signing and maps. Area entrances and signs will be standardized throughout the state. In addition, a distinctive look will be developed in conjunction with the Department's Information and Education Program to differentiate Department areas from other areas managed by different agencies. This effort is on going with the distribution of the first signs completed in July of 2009 and the completion of the effort in October of 2011.
- Concentrate on hiring and promoting quality personnel to help with the long-term stability, integrity and services provided by the program.
- Complete the procedure manuals, which were initiated in 2005 to guide, and assist employees with their job responsibilities, duties and tasks. The procedure manuals will

provide task guidance through detailed descriptions of techniques and duties. In addition, the manuals will contain a calendar of deadlines to facilitate planning and preparation. The procedure manuals should be completed by December of 2010.

Program: Habitat Protection

Division: Office of the Director

Mission: Coordinate project proposal reviews and evaluations of land use plans and energy development projects within the Department as well as with other local, state and federal agencies. Develop and negotiate planning and mitigation strategies to protect important game and non-game habitats.

Program Facts: The Habitat Protection program is made up of one major subprogram, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

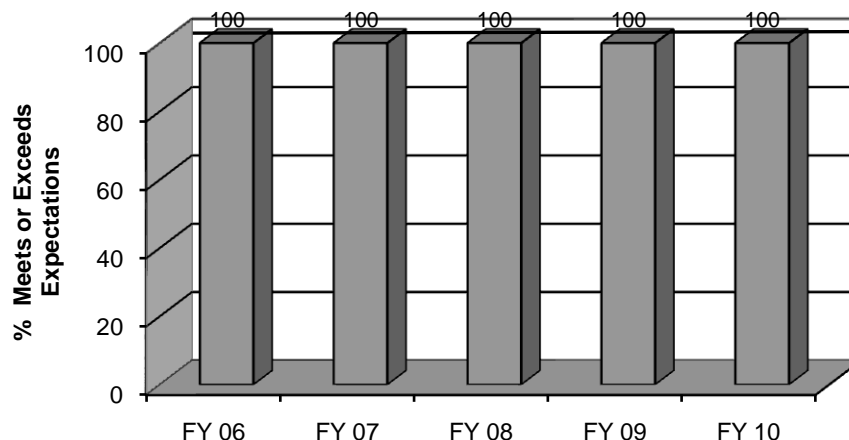
<u>Subprogram</u>	<u># FTEs</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Habitat Protection Program	7.0	\$ 474,633 ¹

This program is located in the Department Headquarters Office in Cheyenne.

Primary Functions of the Habitat Protection program:

- **Coordinate Department review and evaluation** of land use plans, projects, policies, and activities that affect fish, wildlife, and their habitats, and make recommendations consistent with Department and Commission policies, position statements, and habitat protection strategies.
- **Develop and negotiate planning and mitigation strategies** regarding energy development.
- **Participate and monitor** federal and state agency land management plans.
- **Provide updated recommendations** for project proponents and the Department.

Performance Measure #1: Performance Appraisals (Personnel in this program will work to ensure 100% of performance appraisals are rated as meets or exceeds expectations).



Story hind the performance:

The Department is responsible for conserving over 800 species of fish and wildlife for the benefit of the citizens of Wyoming. Most of the management focus for maintaining viable populations of these species depends on availability of suitable habitat. The Department actively manages only a very small percentage of that habitat, and thus a large part of our responsibility toward maintaining and supporting our citizens' fish and wildlife resource entails advising the land use actions of other parties so that negative impacts on species and habitats can be avoided, minimized, or mitigated, and positive effects are supported and enhanced.

Review and evaluation of land use actions, active liaison with other parties that have authorities and roles in those actions, formulation of strategies to minimize negative impacts, and active negotiation to assure implementation of those strategies are key action items of the Department. Support of these functions by the Office of the Director is necessary for their successful implementation, and performance appraisals of program personnel are the key Department measure of the success of the program. The performance appraisals include items that the Office of the Director uses to describe and reflect program effectiveness with other agencies, based on their awareness of our relationship and positive communication with those agencies. These include Performance Standards #1 (policies, procedures, and planning), #3 (teamwork), #5 (quantity), #7 (communication), and #11 (program organization and output). An average rating of "meets expectations" or "exceeds expectations" for the three professional positions within Habitat Protection program will indicate satisfactory performance in addressing the primary functions of the program. Since FY 02, the three professional positions have consistently had a score of 100 percent, indicating that all categories met or exceeded expectations.

What we propose to maintain performance in the next two years:

- This performance measure does not really measure effectiveness of the Habitat Protection program. We are proposing a replacement performance measure. We would like to evaluate the percentage of projects that contain important habitats that are actually protected as a result of our recommendations.
- As a replacement performance measure we will coordinate with the field to determine the top four projects within the region and monitor for success or failure of maintaining habitat functionality.

Program: Information

Division: Services

Mission: Disseminate information to promote public understanding and support for wildlife, wildlife habitat, wildlife conservation and the Department's management programs.

Program Facts: The Information program is made up of two major sub-programs, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-programs</u>	<u>#FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Information	4.0	\$ 118,843
Publications	<u>5.0</u>	<u>450,632</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	9.0	\$ 569,475

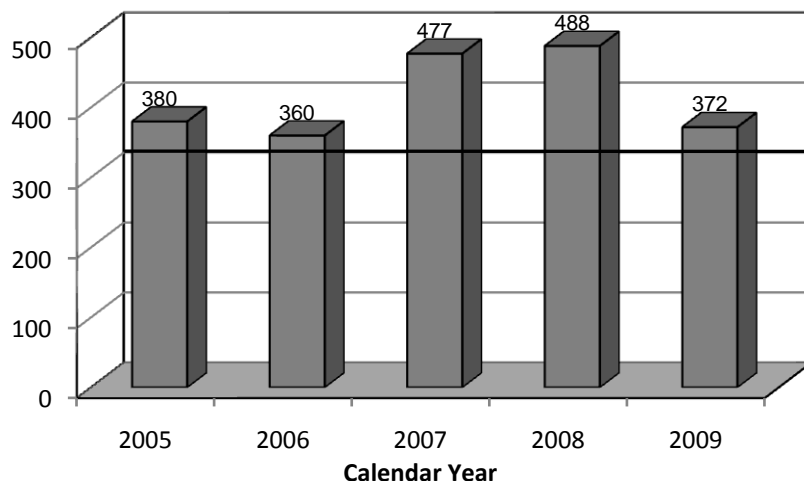
** Includes permanent positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

This program is located in the Department Headquarters Office in Cheyenne.

Primary Functions of the Information Program:

- **Disseminate information to promote public understanding and support for wildlife, wildlife habitat, and wildlife conservation** *through* audio, video, print and other media, and personal contact with constituents. These efforts to provide wildlife-related information facilitate the development of informed support for Department programs.
- **Encourage involvement and cooperation of the Department's management programs** *through* proactive outreach strategies, including three external publications that encourage interest in wildlife and wildlife habitat and provide information on current Department management practices. These publications, provided consistently throughout the fiscal year, facilitate the development of informed support for Department programs.
- **Serve people** *by* providing wildlife, hunting and fishing related information through the news media and personal contacts.

Performance Measure #1: Number of radio news, television news, public service announcements and print news releases produced (Personnel in this program will work to produce at least 300 news releases and public service announcements per year).



Story behind the performance:

The Information program produces and distributes weekly print, radio and television news. The weekly radio program includes a 10-minute, 3-minute and 30-second program. Radio stories are produced in digital format and are available for download via the Department website. Currently, approximately 17 radio stations around the state use the program, reaching an audience of more than 100,000 each week. In addition, personnel produce three live radio programs, which are broadcast each month throughout Wyoming. Some stations broadcast two programs during the month, while others broadcast a separate monthly program.

Weekly television news programs air on two Wyoming and one Nebraska network and cable stations, reaching an audience of more than 150,000 weekly. Video public service announcements air on approximately nine Wyoming and two out-of-state stations. The Department's television news features and radio shows are posted on the Department's website, significantly increasing the reach and audience these news sources. Where appropriate, the video news stories are cross-referenced with print news stories, providing exposure to this expanding area.

Print news release packets are prepared and distributed weekly via an e-mail distribution list and traditional mail to each of Wyoming's 43 local newspapers, representing 175,000 Wyoming households. The packet is also distributed to the Associated Press, radio stations and participating license vendors. The packet can be viewed on the Department's website.

The average information dissemination for the last five years is 407 individual print, radio or television news releases or public service announcements distributed. In 2008, the number of news and public service announcements distributed was 488. This number is just slightly higher than the 477 distributed in 2007. The number of news releases distributed fluctuates depending on the issues and challenges the Department faces each year. The slight increase in 2008 is likely due to an expanded topic base and an improved work planning process implemented through the Department's annual information and education strategic planning sessions. In 2009 personnel in the Department headquarters were moved to new offices in order to facilitate renovations. This move interrupted production of weekly radio programs temporarily, accounting for the decrease in overall programs released.

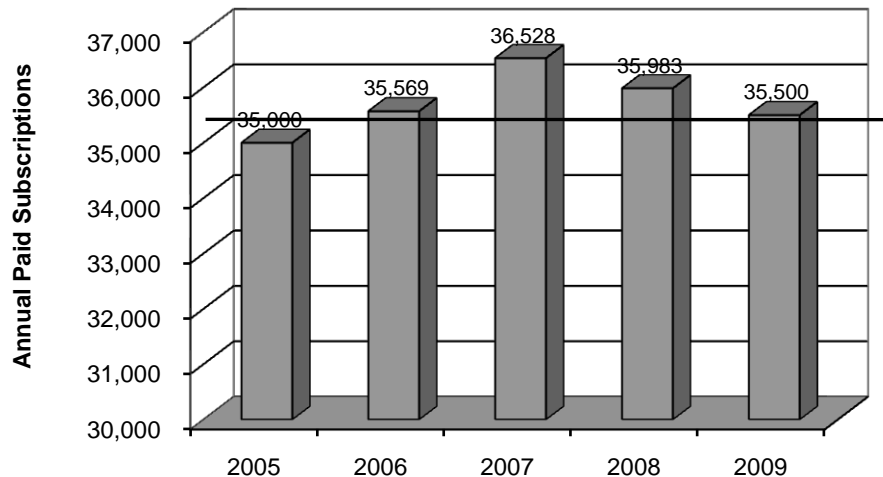
While the Information work unit distributes a great deal of the Department's news and information, it is not the only work unit or division reporting news. One challenge is to coordinate our public outreach efforts with other work units within the Department to ensure the Department maintains a consistent position on issues and covers all issues efficiently.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue efforts in strategic media planning to identify the most efficient use of staff, resources and medium to disseminate information to the external public.
- Expand web-based video distribution. This is a cost-effective way to increase the reach of our video news programs and feature videos. Investigate alternative distribution methods, such as podcasting, and secure funding for marketing to make more customers aware of these new features.

- Continue to monitor workloads and adjust duties and responsibilities as necessary to ensure efficient use of resources.
- Redesign the Department website, which should help improve information distribution and customer service.

Performance Measure #2: Paid subscriptions of *Wyoming Wildlife* magazine and *Wyoming Wildlife News* (Personnel in this program will work to maintain at least 35,000 active subscriptions to these two publications).



Story behind the performance:

The Publications sub-program produces two regular publications: *Wyoming Wildlife* magazine a monthly, 4-color publication; and *Wyoming Wildlife News*, a semi-monthly tabloid newspaper. Average monthly subscription for the magazine was more than 31,000, while estimates of readership were three times that amount. Distribution of the News is approximately 30,000 per issue, including a per-issue average of 4,800 subscribers. Both publications are tools used by the Department to raise awareness of Departmental and wildlife news and issues.

Wyoming Wildlife News's target audience is sportsmen and women and other outdoor enthusiasts. The focus of the *News* is hunting, fishing and trapping information, along with sections on fish and wildlife management. The *News* is distributed free of charge at Game and Fish offices, license selling agents and other vendors across Wyoming, and also through subscriptions.

Wyoming Wildlife magazine's target audience is largely wildlife advocates and enthusiasts who may or may not be active hunters or anglers. The magazine offers lengthier feature articles than the *News* or our weekly news releases to provide a more in-depth analysis of wildlife species, habitat or issues.

These two publications are the only Department public relations tools that defray much of their own cost. New subscribers ensure the Department's messages are being communicated to as large and as wide a base as possible and maximize the efficiency of publication production.

The average paid subscriptions for both the *News* and the magazine over the last five years is 35,976 per year. Subscriptions for 2009 were slightly below average at 35,500. Because of a lack of funding, no research has been conducted on subscription renewal rates or potential subscriber interest, making it difficult to pinpoint the reasons for varied subscription rates from year to year.

The Publications work unit relies on some freelance articles and photographs for the *Wyoming Wildlife* magazine and *Wyoming Wildlife News*, resulting in increased costs related to purchasing articles and photos, and an out-of-date photo file. Additionally, there is a need for additional funds for a survey tool to understand readers' desires and opinions, and marketing funds to increase circulation.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Create and maintain a web presence for both publications. A web presence would further increase visibility of the magazine and expand the potential subscriber base. The Department's website remains a cost-effective marketing tool to increase readership and subscribers.
- Cross-promote all publications and outreach efforts to increase visibility and expand potential subscriber base. Articles, photographs and teasers for both publications will appear in the e-newsletter. Wherever possible, print and radio news releases should include mention of *Wyoming Wildlife* magazine and *Wyoming Wildlife News*.
- Given adequate funding, implement a readership survey to assess current subscriber satisfaction and demographics of both *Wyoming Wildlife* magazine and *Wyoming Wildlife News*. This will provide the Department with baseline data on our readership and give hard data to determine how adjusting the focus, content, delivery or price of either publication will affect current readership.

Program: Information Technology

Division: Services

Mission: Provide high quality, secure technology solutions, services and support to the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and external constituents to allow for sound fiscal and management decisions.

Program Facts: The Information Technology program is made up of one major sub-program, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-program</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Information Technology	17.0	\$ 2,998,191

* Includes permanent, contract and temporary positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.

One At-Will-Employee-Contract (AWEC) position has continued to help provide extended-hours technical support for the Department Electronic License Point-of-Sale Service. Payroll for the GIS Analyst position was funded in the 601A CWCS 09-10 General Fund budget and the position remains as a GIS support position within the GIS Section of the Information Technology program.

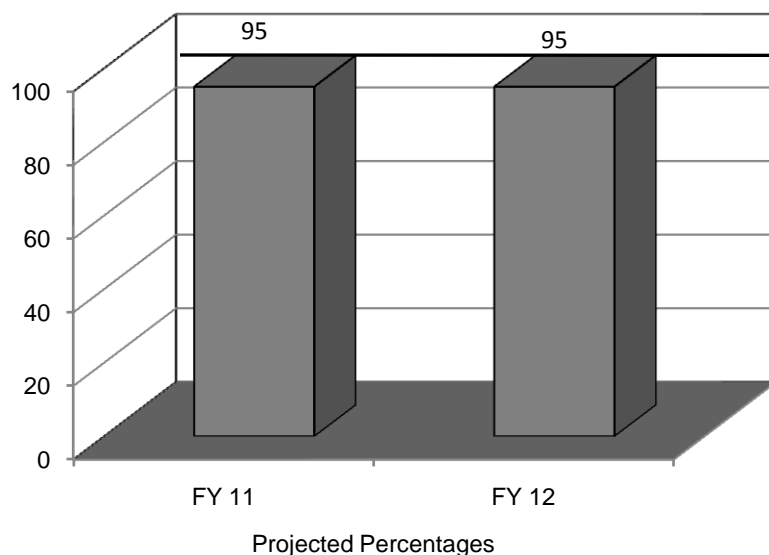
The Information Technology program is also referred to as the Management Information Services program in Fiscal documentation. The current program is made up of administration and three sections: Application Development, Operations and Support, and Geographic Information Systems.

This program is located in the Department Headquarters Office in Cheyenne.

Primary Functions of the Information Technology Program:

- **Provide high quality, secure technology solutions to the Department** that support the overall mission and empower personnel to achieve completion of their workload *through* the use of technology in a successful, efficient, timely and cost effective manner.
- **Provide services and support to ensure** data integrity and security.
- **Provide support to external constituents** *by* providing and supporting an Internet hardware and software framework to facilitate better Department communication with our constituents and to provide a means for dynamic interaction between the Department and the general public.
- **Facilitate sound fiscal decisions** *by* evaluating technology to identify the best solution to a given problem, challenge, or situation and leverage Information Technology network architecture, hardware and software to identify opportunities for cost savings.
- **Facilitate sound management decisions** *by* developing and maintaining Department data standards and applications to support Department-wide centralization of data; identifying and developing technical options for resolving application or system problems; researching new technology and making recommendations on the adoption of new methods or the acquisition of new technical hardware and software tools to improve agency operations; and monitoring emerging technologies to effectively evaluate opportunities to improve current agency operations by incorporating or migrating to viable new hardware, software, and technology implementations.

Performance Measure #1: Percent of System Uptime (Personnel in this section will work to ensure the system is up at least 95% of the time).



Story behind the performance:

Since the mid-1970s, the Department has utilized both computers and associated electronic information systems and networks to facilitate the efficient exchange of information both among employees and between employees and outside entities. Originally, specific computer expertise was not necessary and many technically savvy Department personnel wrote their own computer applications. Since that time, computers and computerized equipment have been used to expand and enhance the volume and variety of tasks that can be performed by individual employees and/or groups of employees. As this capacity has grown and permeated every facet of the Department's operations, a broad array of responsibilities has developed that must be addressed at every level of the Department's hierarchy.

In 1996, the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Section was organizationally combined with Information Technology (IT) to form what is now called the IT/GIS Branch. Then in early 2004, due to the increased workload, an increasingly clear division of labor, and statewide IT Governance initiatives, the IT portion of this branch was split into two distinct subsections with a separate supervisor over each. With this change, the IT/GIS Branch is now made up of three separate subsections (Operations and Support, Application Development, and GIS) in addition to branch administration. These subsections are responsible for managing 30 physical servers, 10 virtual servers, 530 personal computers located in the headquarters office, 8 regional offices, and remote locations throughout Wyoming, and 254 Internet Point-of-Sale (IPOS) system touch screen devices located at Department offices and license selling agent locations throughout Wyoming; developing and supporting 64 mission critical applications; and maintaining approximately 70 layers of statewide GIS data and associated GIS applications. They are also responsible for procurement and support of a wide range of peripheral devices ranging from printers to digital cameras, GPS units and all related software.

To make effective technology strategy recommendations, IT/GIS personnel must maintain a thorough understanding of the Department's goals, objectives, and methods by which the Department's various programs intend to reach these. Continual changes to the environment in which the applications operate (interfaces to other applications, changes to hardware, software, and operating systems, new data from users, evolving technologies) requires a dedicated team of informed operations specialists, application developers, and GIS analysts working cooperatively to maintain and improve these systems.

System and service failures can rapidly impact large numbers of customers, suppliers, and internal staff. Network outages, server failures, e-mail downtime, and broken desktop computers can significantly reduce the productivity of the entire Department. Since implementing e-Commerce systems in 2007, the Department has become increasingly dependent on technologies to process license sales (just under \$66 million dollars were processed through these systems in 2010). It is essential that data integrity is maintained and that this system has the capacity to handle over 200 concurrent License Selling Agents, plus Internet users. At peak times, it is not outrageous to think that there could be 6,000 to 8,000 Internet users submitting on-line applications per day, with over 200 LSAs completing daily transactions at the same time.

Thus, reduced or failed service during even part of a day can seriously impact business and certainly influence both internal and external customer perception of the IT/GIS program, especially if this occurs during critical periods. Conversely, when the IT Operations team is executing effectively in building and maintaining a robust infrastructure, and the IT Applications Development team has programmed streamlined and well performing applications, their work is invisible since the technology is performing as employees and customers expect.

An example of this was seen in July of 2004 and July of 2005 when serving up Big Game License Draw results via our Internet Website. While systems had been running seamlessly throughout the year, they were not able to handle a significant increase in traffic generated by hunters and outfitters looking for draw results. This contributed to an overload of phone calls to the Department Telephone Information Center, resulting in unsatisfied internal and external customers.

Shortly thereafter, IT personnel conducted extensive research, testing and revamping of our systems and telecommunications lines in order to make this application stable for 2006. More recently, IT personnel moved independent Department database and Web servers into a load balanced Web-farm environment to further improve stability and performance of these systems. This work, along with re-writing the License Draw Results Application using Microsoft .NET technologies, has significantly enhanced the performance of these systems, resulting in significant application up-time especially during critical big game license application periods. Improved customer satisfaction with the performance of our e-commerce systems has illustrated that the entire Department Internet site needs to be rewritten in the same technologies to permanently resolve remaining customer satisfaction issues.

With advances in worldwide e-Commerce, securing credit card transactions and further hardening systems to help guard against identity theft have taken center stage. As of July 2010 the Department is required to comply with Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security

Standards. This brings with it an additional set of requirements in order to meet and maintain compliance. These requirements affect everything from network infrastructure to the individual desktop and work in this area continues.

In light of work done on our e-Commerce systems, IT/GIS Branch personnel continue to face challenges with integrating and centralizing many Department computer applications, specifically related to allocating adequate programming time for completion. This involves a large number of applications originally developed by Department employees and ultimately integrated into a centralized system.

In relation to enterprise e-mail, the State of Wyoming contracted with Google to implement a centralized e-mail system for state agencies. This project will impact the way we do business on several fronts and we will need to keep a close eye on ramifications and act accordingly, depending on these impacts.

Our IT Operations personnel have also been heavily involved in technology aspects of the Cheyenne Headquarters Office renovation project. They have been working closely with architects and contractors to design a modern data center, complete with a temperature controlled and conditioned power environment that is intended to better house and facilitate our internal agency and e-commerce systems.

The IT help desk and IT governance (the rules and regulations under which an IT department functions and a mechanism put in place to ensure compliance with those rules and regulations) are in place to assist internal and external customers in achieving their individual goals. A critical role of these entities is also to help protect against system failures and are large drivers of customer satisfaction, which is a main driver of the need for system uptime.

The IT help desk interacts with Department personnel on a constant basis and there are few, if any other entities within the Department that regularly interact with and impact virtually every employee daily. Response time, courtesy of the representative, level of follow-up/follow-through, and resolution speed are all factors that drive customer satisfaction. With the exponential rate that technologies are evolving, having the ability to provide the desired technologies in a timely manner, at a reasonable cost, and then to be able to support those technologies when employees need assistance can also be a daunting challenge. This especially true considering that this must be done in accordance and in compliance with the security standards noted above. Similar to service failure, a single mistake by IT/GIS personnel can impact the reputation of the entire program because of the potential actual and perceived ramifications of the error. Several other areas that affect the user base include user administration, capacity planning, disaster recovery, and security as noted above.

Regarding the IT governance aspect, during the 2002 budget session the Wyoming Legislature created a state Chief Information Officer Position and significant affects to the Department were seen beginning in 2003. With this position came a statewide Information Technology Governance Structure, which began implementation of centralized common IT services throughout state government and included technology procurement. This process has also required a significant amount of effort and time commitment, especially for the Department IT Manager, which in turn has reduced time available to address Department specific IT direction.

We anticipate that this will continue to require a large amount of time in order to ensure that Department interests are considered throughout the IT Governance Structure.

A similar effort driving customer satisfaction can be seen in efforts to centralize and reduce fragmentation of GIS work throughout the Department. We are beginning to see large support towards this initiative. We believe this support is in part due to individuals beginning to see value in collaboration benefits of centralized data. A GIS Working Group was created to help address agency-wide GIS consolidation and had begun to see successes with budget approvals to begin building the framework for this project. At the end of FY 08, the paperwork to officially transfer a vacant position to the GIS Section was initiated. This position will build the back-end infrastructure to facilitate the centralization of geospatial data, advance the concept of a Department enterprise GIS program, and contribute to ongoing technical support of the program's end-users. Due to economic downturn, this position was frozen and ultimately eliminated, which will continue to delay building the framework for this project.

At the same time, Department-wide demand for GIS work has continued to rise significantly over the past year. Examples of these demands include assignments to the Western Governor's Wildlife Council's Western States Decision Support System Sub-Group, the Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative (GNLCC), and work with the Federal Government and other land use agencies on Project Impact Area Analysis (PIAA) activities. As more efforts have been initiated to address concerns associated with species and their habitats (GNLCC, sage-grouse implementation recommendations, State Wildlife Action Plan revision and implementation, Strategic Habitat Plan revision, etc.), all of which base data needs, analyses and products on GIS technologies, such impacts have increased.

The Geospatial Information Systems necessary to support this work are an integrated part of our larger technology infrastructure. As such, our ability to maintain uptime of these systems is essential to supporting these projects as well. With the additional Department priorities noted above, our ability to address projects and activities planned at an earlier date have been delayed as priorities are reevaluated, thus customer perceptions of our service in this area may decline.

What we propose to do to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to prioritize the GIS workload and work closely with Services Division and Department Administration to find ways to address the increasing demand for GIS technologies.
- Rewrite the Department Internet site in Microsoft .NET technologies to permanently improve performance, especially during critical use times.
- Continue refinement of our problem tracking system to further identify trends in an effort to increase the capability of the team to correct problems and minimize potential for recurrence, thereby lowering overall IT support costs in the future. We have now implemented this in the IT/GIS Branch and plan to gradually expand the use of this software to other entities throughout the Department. Our ability to accomplish this expansion will be largely dependent on time allocated to bringing up the new ELS Internet Point-of-Sale system, which has been given our number one priority.

- Define and document the application architecture (the description of all software applications and how they interface with each other) in order to prioritize applications, maintenance and development on a Department-wide basis.
- Promote information sharing across the Department and other state agencies by actively working with personnel to integrate and centralize their applications and data. We have been centralizing databases into our SQL database server on a continual basis and we plan to continue this work as a part of our promotion and facilitation of agency-wide data sharing.
- Proactively engage in public relations efforts to highlight our successes and ensure that our efforts are recognized by Department personnel, as communication is possibly the single most important task we can do to affect the perception of performance. This will include revising a packet of technology related information specifically pertinent to new employees (IT/GIS Branch structure, policies, procurement process, how-to's, a description for help information that is available on the Intranet) that they should find helpful when beginning employment.
- Continue participation in the statewide IT Governance process to ensure that the Department interests are considered throughout the IT Governance development. This will help ensure that mandates that may negatively impact Department employee work are kept to a minimum, thus helping to improve internal satisfaction.
- Utilize administrative assistants more regularly and where appropriate to assist us with paperwork and documentation.

Program: Legislatively Mandated Expenses

Division: Fiscal Division

Mission: Ensure funding availability and statutory compliance on those programs in which the Department is required to earmark funds to meet Wyoming statutory provisions.

Program Facts: The Legislatively Mandated Expenses program is listed below with the 2010 (FY 10) budget:

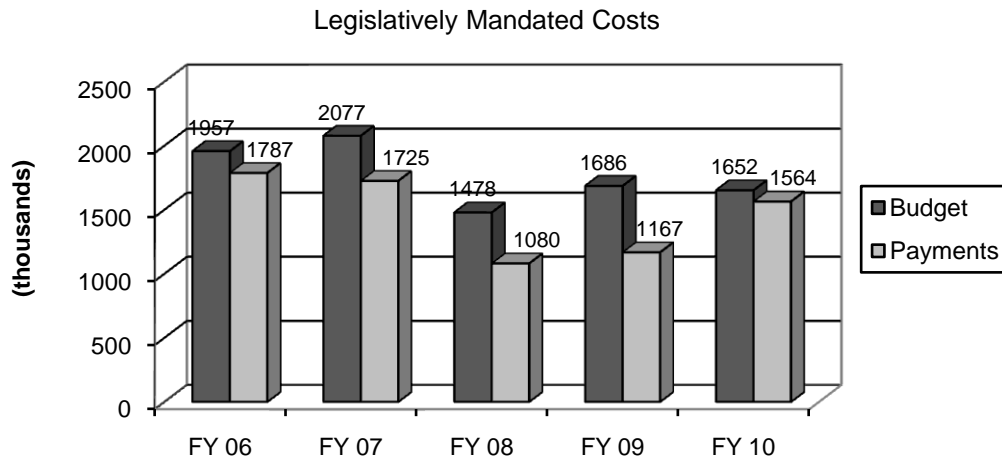
<u>Sub-Program</u>	<u>#FTE's</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Damage Claims	0.0	\$ 500,000
Landowner Coupons	0.0	800,000
Retiree Assessment	0.0	75,000
Salec	<u>0.0</u>	<u>277,200</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>		\$1,562,200

This program is administered in the Department Headquarters office in Cheyenne.

Primary Function of the Legislatively Mandated Expenses Program:

- **Ensure funding availability and statutory compliance** by establishing and monitoring specific budgets and processing all payments that are required for these programs in accordance with Wyoming state statutory and/or regulatory requirements.

Performance Measure #1: Commission approved budget is sufficient to meet annual payments.



Story behind the performance:

Between 2004 and 2007, these costs escalated 16 percent, from \$1.5 million in FY 04 to \$1.73 million in FY 07. However, in 2008 the state Budget office, with the approval of the Governor's office, discontinued the charge for cost allocation, which had increased to over \$600,000 annually by FY 06. The Budget office began assessing this charge to Wyoming Game and Fish in the mid 1990's. However, normally these costs are charged to allow agencies to capture additional federal dollars, whereas the majority of federal funds the Department receives are formula based, where additional costs do not result in additional funds being awarded to the Department. The Department has utilized the majority of these savings in the form of special one-time projects for habitat, access, and education. Whether this moratorium will continue beyond 2010 is not known at this time, as the amount of cost allocation, if charged the Department in FY 11, would approximate \$1 million. Additionally, landowner coupon payments have increased 33 percent in the last two years, from \$627,000 to \$836,000 annually, due to both increased doe fawn deer and antelope license issuance and the increase in the landowner coupon rate from \$13 to \$16 effective in the 2008 hunting season. The payments reflected above: damage claims, landowner coupons, peace officer retiree assessment, cost allocation and Salec are non discretionary as the payment amounts are either set by legislation, regulation or are pass-through costs of other state agencies.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- The Department, based on concurrence of the Governor and Legislature is hoping to continue the moratorium on cost allocation, which will allow the Department to use those savings on projects that benefit wildlife enthusiasts, rather than on administrative overhead.

Program: Personnel Management

Division: Office of the Director

Mission: Institute and administer policies, procedures and programs that facilitate recruitment and retention of effective and productive employees to meet the needs of the Commission, Department and citizens of Wyoming.

Program Facts: The Personnel Management program is made up of one sub-program, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

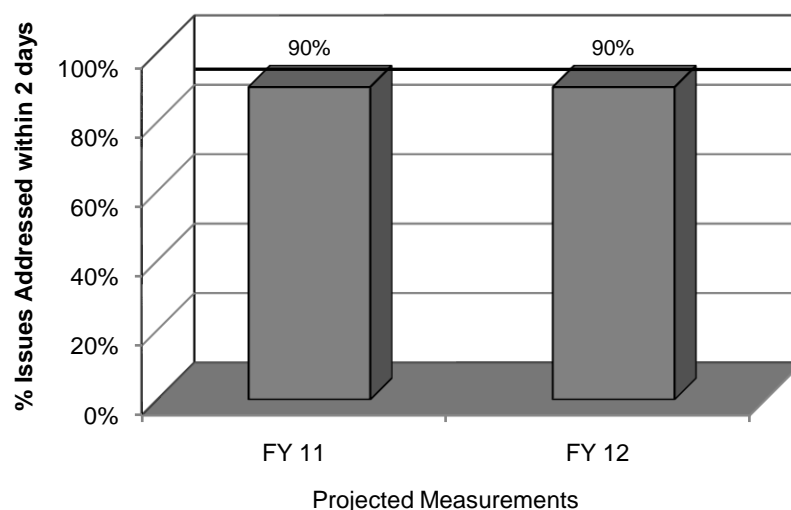
<u>Sub-program</u>	<u># FTEs</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Personnel Management	4	\$195,701

This program is located in the Department Headquarters Office in Cheyenne.

Primary Functions of the Personnel Management Program:

- **Facilitate recruitment and retention of effective and productive employees**, by conducting recruitment activities, training, compensation analysis, benefit administration, payroll services, discipline guidance, rule and law advice and providing general counsel to employees and administrators of the Department.
- **Develop and maintain effective and productive employees** through recommendation and implementation of policies, procedures, programs and practices developed with employee and managerial input.

Performance Measure #1: Questions and requests are addressed and completed within a two (2) day time frame. Exceptions to this are identified and communicated to employees. (Personnel in this program will work to ensure that at least 90% percent of questions are addressed in the time frame).



Story behind the performance:

Excellent customer service is critical to the success of the Personnel Management section. In addition to maintaining a courteous and professional work environment, the Personnel staff strives to provide accurate, timely and valuable information and services to both internal and external customers.

An effective and productive workforce relies on accurate and timely receipt of information and responses to questions in keeping with the self-prescribed expectations in their work behaviors.

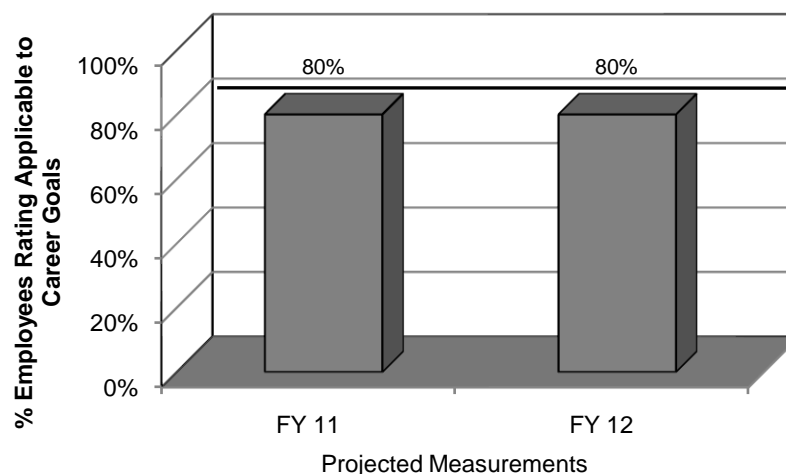
Employees who, through experience, develop a confidence in the accuracy and timeliness of services provided by Personnel Management can realize significant positive impacts in their own productivity and effectiveness.

Personnel Management's mission to recruit and retain effective and productive employees can only be met if employees and administrators feel confident in the information and services provided by Personnel Management

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Monitor levels of internal constituent satisfaction with the accuracy and timeliness of information they receive in regard to their contacts with Personnel Management staff.
- Expand and improve the use of web based technology to better provide timely delivery of information and services to employees and administrators.

Performance Measure #2: Develop, enhance and implement programs that focus on developing employees to enable them to achieve their career goals. (Personnel in this section will work to ensure that 80% percent of employees feel these programs are applicable to their career goals.)



Story behind the performance:

The employees of the Department have always been regarded as our most valuable asset. It is the mission of Personnel Management to recruit and retain effective and productive employees to carry out the mission of the Department. Today's workforce faces a unique challenge; as the baby boomer generation continues to reach retirement age and leave the workplace, they take with them experience, knowledge and leadership that is critical to the operation of the Department. It is imperative that we provide our employees with the opportunities to excel in their current positions, as well as develop the knowledge and skill needed to move into key leadership positions.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Determine levels of internal constituent satisfaction with the types and effectiveness of programs provided by Personnel Management as it relates to employee development.
- Identify opportunities to develop or enhance programs in order to better meet the needs of the Department and employees.

Program: Property Rights (Lands) Management

Division: Services/Wildlife

Mission: To administer and monitor currently owned Wyoming Game and Fish Commission property rights. To acquire property rights to restore and conserve habitat to enhance and sustain wildlife populations now and in the future. To acquire property rights, provide public access and public recreation, such as hunting and fishing access on private and landlocked public land.

Program Facts: The Property Rights Management program is made up of two major sub-programs, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budgets.

<u>Sub-programs</u>	<u>#FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Property Rights (Lands) Admin. **	3.0	\$ 849,430
PLPW Access Sub-Program	<u>7.6</u>	<u>1,500,658 ***</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	10.6	\$ 2,350,088

* Includes permanent, contract and temporary positions.

** Includes Property Rights Administration and Strategic Habitat Plan.

*** Includes personnel, operations and easement payments.

Property Rights Administration sub-program is located in Services Division and is based out of the Department Headquarters in Cheyenne. The Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) Access sub-program is located in the Wildlife Division and is based out of the Casper Regional Office.

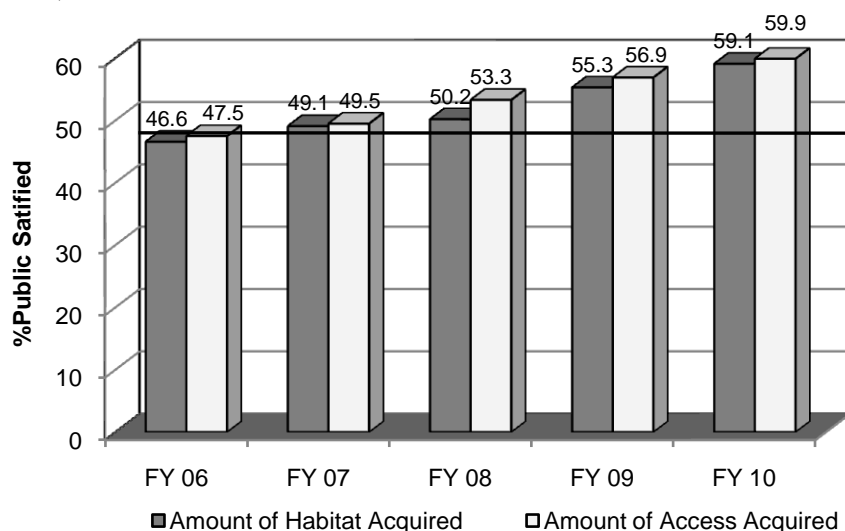
Primary Functions of the Property Rights Management Program:

- **Administer Commission property rights** by providing support and technical expertise to Staff and Commission members on all real property rights management issues and we address

requests for assistance and information. By providing assurance that all real property rights issues follow state and federal laws, rules, guidelines and policies.

- **Monitor Commission property rights** by annual physical inspections to evaluate possible encroachments and provide recommendations for Commission action.
- **Acquire property rights to restore and conserve habitat** by assisting in the implementation of the Strategic Habitat Plan to identify wildlife habitats where habitat quality should be preserved through fee title acquisitions, conservation easements, leases, and agreements, by acquiring public access and public recreations rights, and by seeking funding partners.
- **Acquire property rights which provide public access and public recreation** by maintaining and enhancing public hunting and fishing access on private and public lands through Hunter Management and Walk-in Areas.

Performance Measure #1: Percentage of general public satisfied with the amount of critical habitat acquired in the state and the percentage of general public satisfied with the amount of public and recreation access acquired in the state (Personnel in this program will work to ensure that at least 45% of the public are satisfied with the amount of both habitat and access acquired by the Department).



Story behind the performance:

The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission owns 166,316 acres and administers another 244,476 acres of federal, state and private lands, which conserve and sustain wildlife populations and provides public access and recreation. In addition, the Game and Fish Commission has acquired permanent public access to over 121 miles of streams and rivers around the state. The performance measures the general public's attitude about the amount of habitat available for wildlife and the amount of public access in the state. This information is collected in an annual survey that is distributed randomly to residents and nonresidents who purchased hunting and fishing licenses in the previous year.

With regard to the amount of habitat acquired, 59.1 percent of the sampled public was satisfied. In regards to the amount of access acquired, 59.9 percent of the public was satisfied. Given the narrow range in satisfaction levels across the years, it is doubtful that the general public

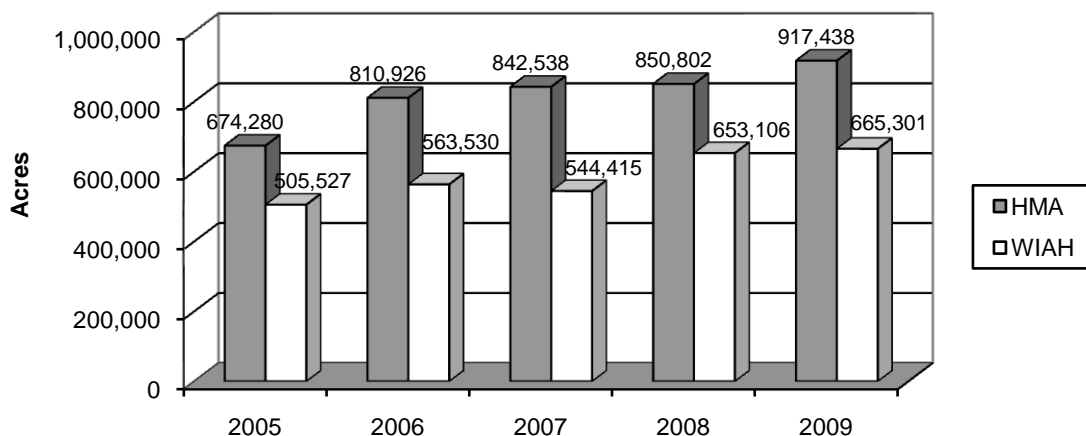
satisfaction will ever be much higher than indicated over the last five years. These consistent results may be due in part to lack of familiarity with the volume of habitat and access that the Property Rights (Lands) Management program acquires every year.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

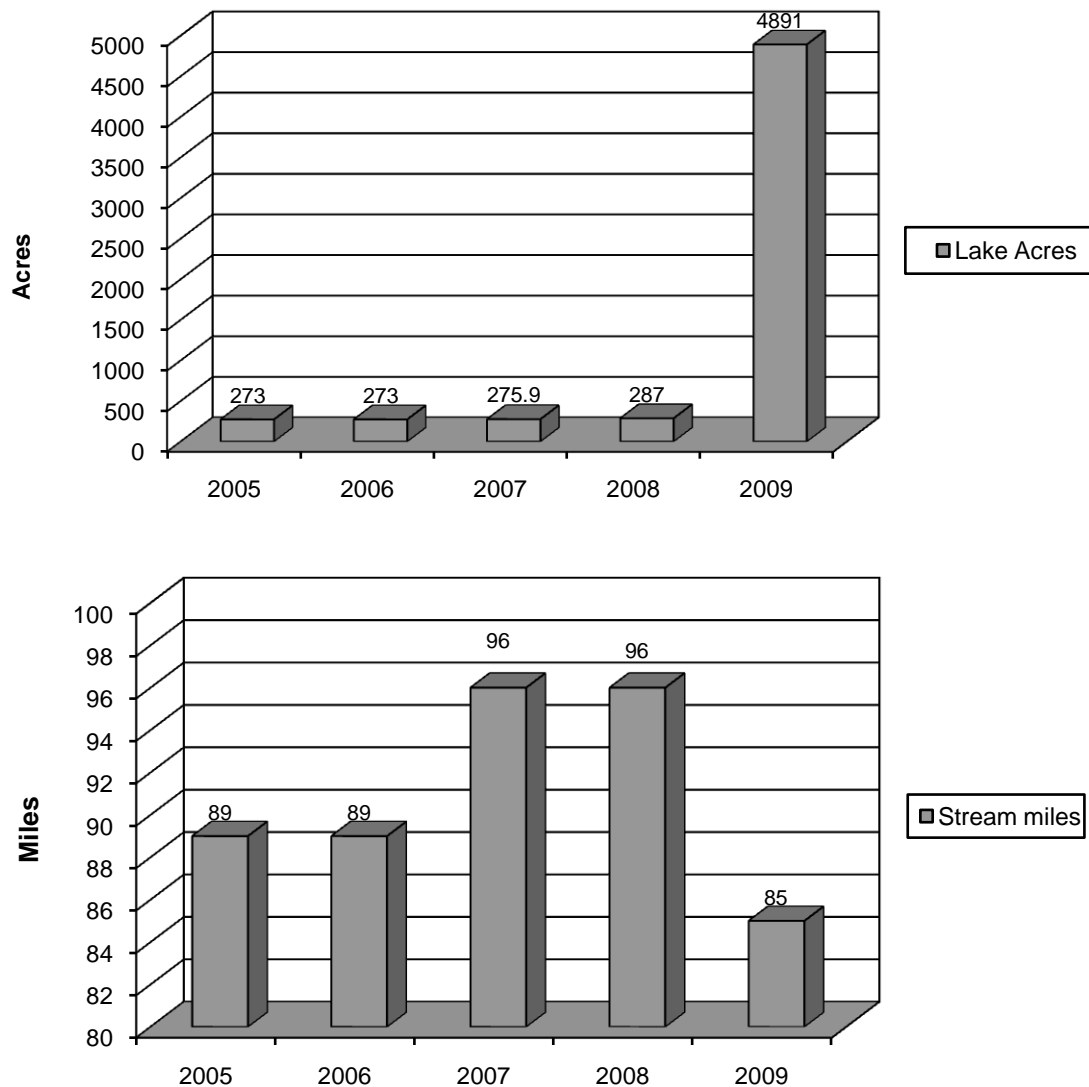
- Continue with implementation of the Department's Strategic Habitat Plan (SHP) by providing technical expertise to conserve and enhance wildlife habitat through fee title acquisitions, conservation easements, leases, and agreements.
- Continue with implementation of Commission priorities in acquiring public access for fishing and recreation.
- Continue to identify funding partners.
- Continue real property inspections and monitoring to ensure compliance of permitted use(s) and potential encroachments that may cause loss of control of Commission-owned or administered lands or waters.

Performance Measure #2: Hunting and fishing access to private and public land (Personnel in this program will work to maintain public hunting access to at least 1.25 million acres of private land, public fishing access to at least 273 lake acres, and public fishing access to at least 100 stream miles).

Number of Private Hunting Acres in Hunter Management and Walk-in Areas.



Number of Fishing Acres and Stream Miles in Walk-in Fishing Areas.



Story behind the performance:

In 2001, the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission adopted the Private Lands Public Wildlife (PLPW) Access Program as a permanent part of the Department. The PLPW Access Program works with Wyoming's private landowners to maintain and enhance hunter and angler access onto private and landlocked public lands. With the assistance of field biologists and wardens, the PLPW Access Program continues to provide extensive areas to hunt and fish.

In addition to providing recreational access, the PLPW Access Program assists with increasing cooperation between the Department, landowners and the public; population management of wildlife; and decreasing agriculture damage through harvest.

The enrollment in each program for 2009 were: Hunter Management, 917,438 acres; Walk-in Hunting, 665,301 acres; Walk-in Fishing lake acres, 4,891 acres; and Walk-in Fishing stream

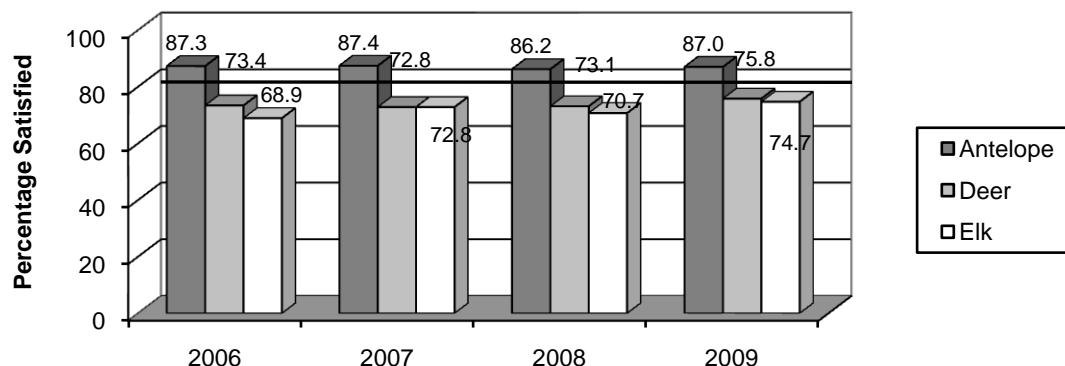
miles, 85 miles. The average enrollment in each program for 2005-2009 is: Hunter Management, 819,197 acres; Walk-in Hunting, 586,376 acres; Walk-in Fishing lake acres, 1,200 acres; and Walk-in Fishing stream miles, 91 miles. Enrollment in either a Walk-in or Hunter Management Area is dependent on the amount of available Access Yes funds. During 2009, easement payments almost reached the Access Yes donations collected by the Department. The number of acres and stream miles should remain fairly constant, as long as, Access Yes funding levels are maintained.

Combined with public lands that were associated with the enrolled private lands, the PLPW Access Program provided approximately 3.2 million acres of hunting access for the fall 2009/spring 2010 hunting seasons. Fishing opportunities are continually sought out for increased opportunity.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- PLPW staff will continue to encourage Access Yes donations from hunters and anglers by working with License Selling Agents and an advertising program.
- PLPW staff will continue to foster cooperative relationships with Department employees for increased assistance with the program.
- PLPW will continue to evaluate new funding sources.
- PLPW will be conducting comprehensive surveys in early 2011 on participating landowners, Department employees, hunters, and anglers to determine future needs, concerns, and possible funding.
- PLPW will continue to pursue two additional regional PLPW access coordinators to alleviate the workload on current employees and improve the quantity of services offered to Department personnel, landowners, and the general public.

Performance Measure # 3: Percent of Big Game Hunters Satisfied with the hunting opportunity provided by the PLPW Walk-In Area and Hunter Management Area programs. (Personnel in this program will work to ensure that at least 75 percent of big game hunters are satisfied with the hunting opportunities provided by the PLPW programs).



Story behind the performance:

This is a relatively new performance measure that was initially included in the 2006 hunter harvest surveys. The harvest surveys provide data of hunter satisfaction with the PLPW Access

Program. After four years of data, the results show hunters positive view of the Hunter Management and Walk-in Area programs.

The satisfaction with the PLPW Access Program remains high. The 2009 harvest survey data, satisfaction rates are: antelope, 87 percent in 2009 (86.2 percent in 2008, 87.34 percent in 2007 and 87.3 percent in 2006); deer, 75.8 percent in 2009 (73.12 percent in 2008, 72.83 percent in 2007 and 73.1 percent in 2006); and elk, 74.7 percent in 2009 (70.71 percent in 2008, 72.76 percent in 2007 and 68.9 percent in 2006). Satisfaction with a hunting experience can mean a variety of things from harvesting a record-book animal to having a place to go. Based on the four years of information, we can determine that overall; satisfaction is high amongst big game hunters using a PLPW Access Program area and has remained relatively constant each year.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- PLPW staff will be conducting comprehensive surveys on hunters/anglers, participating landowners, and Department employees to determine program satisfaction.
- PLPW staff will continue to foster cooperative relationships with Department employees for increased assistance with program.
- PLPW will continue to pursue two additional Regional PLPW Access Coordinators position to provide adequate coverage of State.

Program: Regional Information and Education Specialist

Division: Services

Mission: Work cooperatively with Department personnel to increase understanding and appreciation of Wyoming's wildlife resources and the habitats upon which they depend. Provide media outreach and wildlife conservation education programs for students, teachers, and other citizens of Wyoming.

Program Facts: The Regional Information and Education Specialist program consists of a single sub-program, listed below with staff numbers and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-program</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Regional Information & Education	7.0	\$ 658,250

** Includes permanent positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

This program is located statewide. One Regional Information and Education Specialist (RIES) is assigned each of the Department's eight regional offices except Pinedale. Information and education needs in the Pinedale Region are addressed by the Jackson RIES Specialist. The Laramie position had divided responsibilities: primarily that of Supervisor of the RIES work unit and a shared responsibility for Laramie RIES functions.

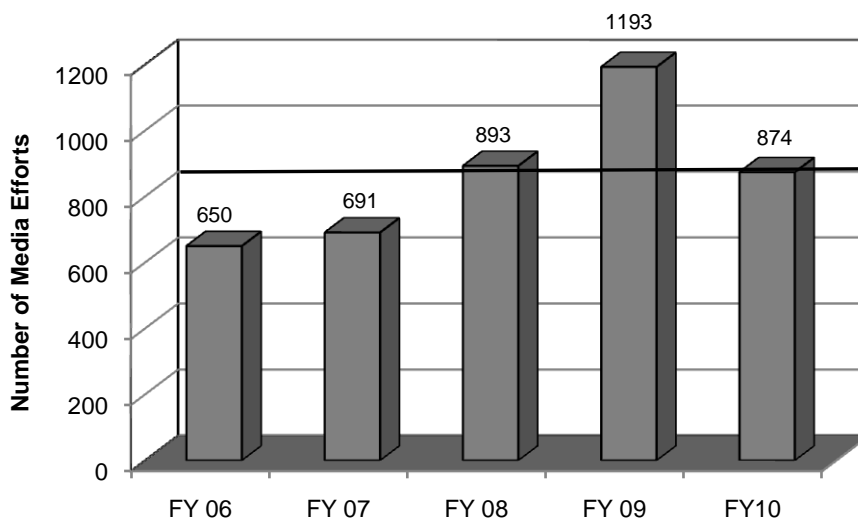
Primary Functions of the Regional Information and Education Specialist Program:

- **Work cooperatively with Department personnel to increase understanding and appreciation of Wyoming's wildlife resources** by providing information and education support to other branches within the Services Division and other divisions within the Department. The RIES program supports the Department's Information program by contributing to the E-newsletter, *Wyoming Wildlife News*, *Wyoming Wildlife Magazine*, and the weekly Department news release packet. Each RIES also maintains a regional web page. The RIES program assists the Conservation Education program through the instruction of traditional hunter education courses, internet field days and the Hunter Education New Instructor Academy. It also assists with Becoming an Outdoors Woman, WILD About OREO (Outdoor Recreation Education Opportunities) educator and youth conservation camps, youth fishing and hunting days, the annual Hunting and Fishing Heritage Exposition (EXPO), 4-H Shooting Sports state shoot and Wyoming's Wildlife Worth the Watching interpretive projects.
- **Provide regional and statewide media outreach** by developing and distributing news releases, conducting media tours designed to provide the media and public with detailed information on important issues facing wildlife, conducting radio programs, conducting radio and television interviews, and television and streaming video public service announcements.
- **Provide regional wildlife conservation education programs** through presentations and hands-on workshops to students, civic groups, conservation groups and others.

Several personnel changes resulted in split duties for the RIES due, in part, to Governor Freudenthal's Hiring and Spending Restrictions Executive Order (#2009-3) which prohibited the recruitment for or filling any position vacancy without the approval of the Governor's office. After the *Wyoming Wildlife News* (WWN) editor resigned, the Casper RIES position was assigned to assist in the production of the WWN. The Lander specialist position was vacated in 2010. To address the I&E needs of the Lander region, the region was divided among the remaining specialists and duties were assigned to each. The Laramie RIES supervisor/specialist received a promotion to Biological Services supervisor in the Wildlife Division. The Laramie position was vacated in May of 2010 and duties have been filled by a Public Relations Specialist assigned to the Cheyenne Headquarters, and the supervision of the RIES was transferred to the Information Supervisor.

In 2010, all frozen positions within the Department were deleted from the budget in a decision initiated by the Joint Appropriations Committee of the Wyoming Legislature. As a result, duties within the regions of the vacated RIES positions will continue to be assigned to other regional specialists.

Performance Measure #1: Number of media interviews, news releases, radio programs, radio interviews, and television public service announcements provided (Personnel in this program will work to produce at least 800 interviews, news releases, radio programs and interviews, and television public service announcements each year).



Story behind the performance:

Many issues affect Wyoming's wildlife. In holding with the Department's mission of serving people, it is important to keep the state's citizens informed of these various issues. This is done through a variety of communications programs and activities.

With the implementation of formal work plans and subsequent discussion within the Information & Education leadership team, additional effort is put into the development of media outreach using common tools such as news releases, meeting announcements, public service announcements, interviews and on-site media field trips. This effort is primarily focused on identified Department, Division, and Regional information and education priorities.

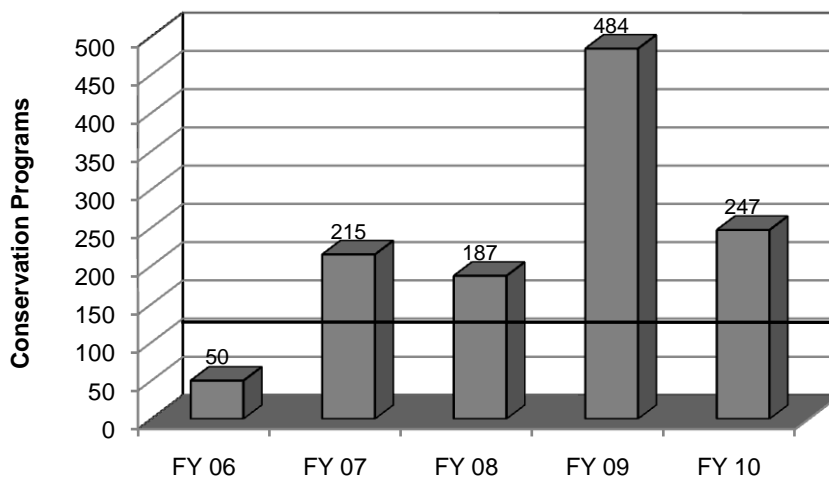
The Laramie position served the dual function of being both the Laramie Region RIES and also being the statewide supervisor of the RIES work unit. Media outreach efforts from this position were not expected to be similar in performance to those of the other regions. This organizational change as well as the vacated Lander position is reflected in the decrease in media efforts.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to divide the media responsibilities of the Lander region among the surrounding specialists and communicate frequently with the Lander region to address their needs.
- Continue to use the monthly record spreadsheet to improve RIES record keeping.
- Continue to improve regional work plans to focus on Department information and education priorities and link our accomplishments to the Services Division monthly reporting process.
- Utilize digital recording equipment purchased to provide digital sound bites to radio stations.
- Utilize the I&E Leadership Team to coordinate work schedules each spring and to facilitate completion of other priorities that come up throughout the year.

- Meet annually with regional media representatives to discuss information distribution efforts and media needs and/or requests. Maintain updated regional media newsgroup e-mail lists for each region.

Performance Measure #2: Number of wildlife conservation education programs (Personnel in this program will work to provide at least 100 education programs per year).



Story behind the performance:

The Regional Information and Education Specialists work collaboratively with Education Branch personnel to provide conservation education programs to the public. Those programs include traditional Hunter Education courses and Internet field days, New Hunter Instructor Academy, National Archery in the Schools Program, Aquatic Education, Becoming An Outdoors Woman Workshop, WILD About OREO Educator and Youth camps, Project WILD workshops, Staying Safe in Bear, Lion, and Wolf Country seminars, Wyoming Hunting and Fishing Heritage EXPO, Youth Fishing Clinics, and 4-H Outdoor Skills Competition.

The regional information and education specialists provide outdoor skills training, field trips, tours of Department education centers, and conservation education programs to primary and secondary schools and colleges, civic clubs, and conservation groups within their respective regions.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Each regional will continue to use a monthly record spreadsheet to improve RIES record keeping.
- Meet with the Conservation Education program personnel and Aquatic Invasive Species program coordinator each winter/spring to plan outreach efforts and coordinate work schedules.
- Balance work unit information outreach and conservation education outreach in annual RIES work plans.
- Actively seek opportunities to provide educational outreach specific to Department information and education priorities.

Program: Regional Terrestrial Wildlife Management

Division: Wildlife

Mission Statement: Coordinate management of terrestrial wildlife and enforce laws and regulations to ensure long-term health and viability of terrestrial wildlife for the people of Wyoming, while providing recreational opportunity and minimizing conflicts.

Program Facts: The Regional Terrestrial Wildlife Management program is made up of three major sub-programs, listed below with the number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget.

<u>Sub-programs</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Regional Terrestrial Wildlife Administration	11.1	\$ 1,767,429 **
Regional Terrestrial Wildlife Biologists	27	3,089,244
Regional Game Wardens	<u>54</u>	<u>6,316,931</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	92.1	\$ 11,173,604

** Includes permanent positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

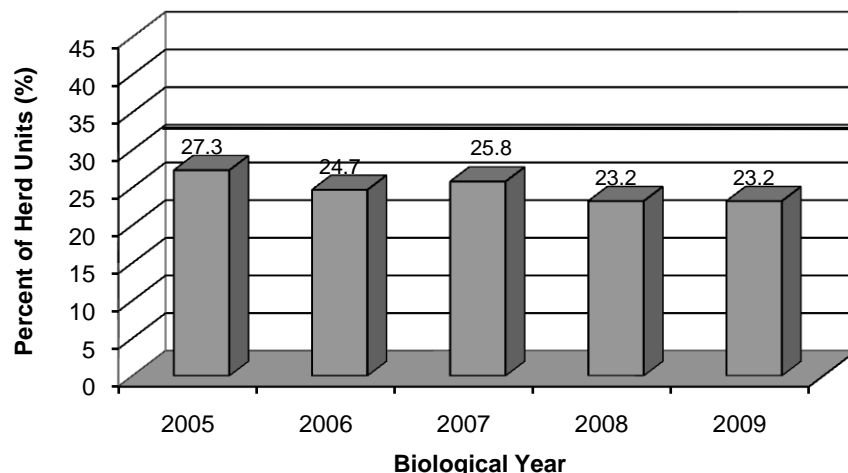
*** Does not include federal cost share dollars (50 percent) that support eight game warden positions.*

The Regional Terrestrial Wildlife Management program is located statewide.

Primary Functions of the Regional Terrestrial Wildlife Management Program:

- **Coordinate management of terrestrial wildlife,** to collect and analyze data, ensure big game management strategies are designed to achieve population objectives, review projects with potential to impact wildlife and their habitats, coordinate with other state and federal agencies and to educate, inform, and seek public input on wildlife management issues. Support, training and leadership are provided to ensure regional objectives and goals are being met.
- **Enforce laws and regulations** to ensure viable wildlife populations and public safety, inform and educate the public about wildlife laws, regulations and their necessity, and to address wildlife damage and wildlife/human conflict complaints. Support, training and leadership are provided to ensure the efficient enforcement of state laws, regulations, and to address wildlife damage and wildlife/human conflict complaints.

Performance Measure #1: Percent of big game herds within 10 percent of population objective (Personnel in this program will work to ensure that at least 30 percent of big game herds are within ± 10 percent of the population objective).



Story behind the performance:

While the Department is responsible for managing over 800 species of wildlife in Wyoming, many of our constituents are focused on the management of big game species (pronghorn antelope, mule deer, white-tailed deer, elk, moose, bighorn sheep, mountain goat and bison). In addition, most of the Department's annual income is derived from license sales for these species. Management of these species is the responsibility of the regional terrestrial wildlife biologists, regional game wardens and the regional terrestrial wildlife administration. Percentages reported are based on post-season population estimates of each species presented in the annual Big Game Hunting Season Recommendation Summaries (2006, 2007 and 2009) and the final big game Job Completion Reports (2007 and 2009).

Hunting seasons and harvest quotas developed by the Department are the primary tools for managing big game species. These are designed to manage herds for population objectives and desired male to female ratios.

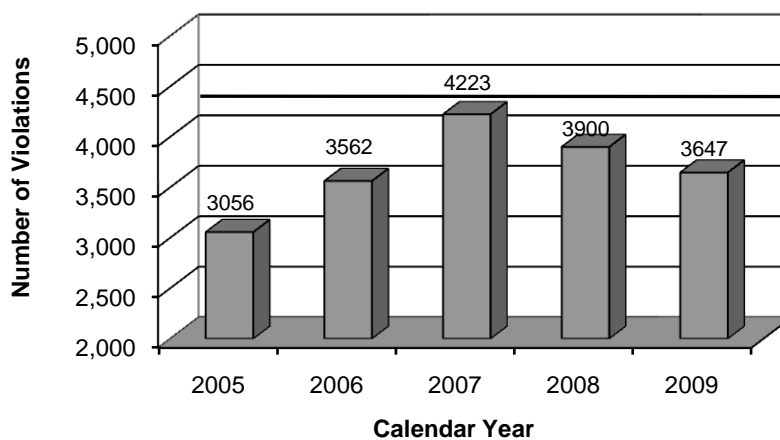
Other factors, usually beyond our control, such as access, weather extremes and wildlife disease outbreaks affect the Department's ability to manage herds toward objective. Lack of hunter access to some hunt areas, especially in eastern Wyoming, limits the Department's ability to obtain the harvest needed to maintain or obtain herd objectives. Weather conditions (drought, severe winters) have limited productivity of many deer and pronghorn herds, and many of these herds remain below objective. The Department currently manages some herds below objective because of the effects drought and other factors have had on wildlife habitat. Even when the drought ends, it takes several years for habitat conditions to improve enough to allow many herds to move towards objective. Elk populations are, in general, above objective despite increased cow harvest in recent years and despite brucellosis in some western Wyoming herds. Landscape-scale habitat improvements to benefit big game and other species are needed in many areas and could be funded under the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust (WWNRT), the Wyoming Governor's Big Game License Coalition (WGBGLC), and other sources.

Since 2005, an average of 24.8 percent of big game herds in Wyoming were within 10 percent of their population objective. In 2009 the percentage was 23.2 percent, and the number has ranged from 23.2 percent to 27.3 percent. Of the total 151 big game herds in Wyoming in 2009, 35 herds (23.2 percent) were at objective (+/- 10 percent), 49 (32.5 percent) were above objective, 38 (25.2 percent) were below objective and 29 herds (19.2 percent) had incomplete data.

What we propose to improve performance in next two years:

- Recommendations for big game hunting seasons will continue to consider factors such as habitat condition, drought, access and management of wildlife disease in addition to the population objective. The Department will continue to fund and promote the AccessYes program in a cooperative effort between the Department and willing landowners. By providing access to private lands this program has allowed the Department to more effectively distribute hunter harvest.

Performance Measure #2: Number of law enforcement investigation reports (LIERs, Total cases entered annually into the case management system). (Personnel in this program will work to enter at least 4,250 reports into the case management system.)



Story behind the performance:

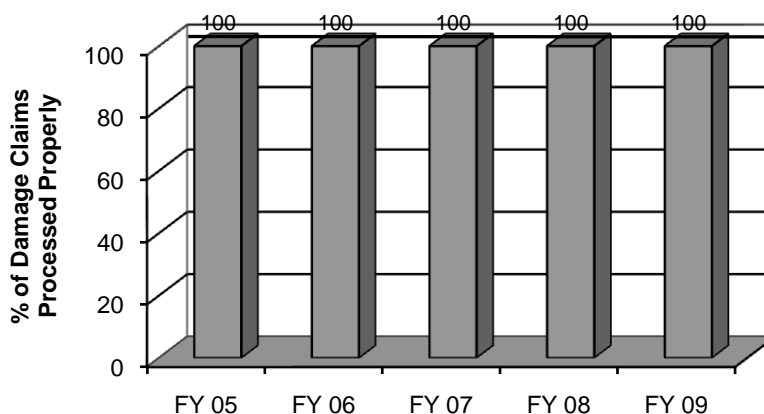
Enforcing wildlife and watercraft safety statutes and regulations is an integral component of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife management. Formal attempts at case management and law enforcement reporting systems have been used by the Department since the late 1970's. Beginning in 1996, records began to be entered into a computerized case management system (CMS), but the system was quite cumbersome to use and to keep updated. A new case management system (CMS2) went online in May of 2007. It was more user-friendly and had data-entry parameters to assist in preventing entry errors. The new system allowed enforcement personnel and SALECS dispatch to have access to all closed cases statewide. Individual cases were downloaded to the main system and the statewide cases were uploaded to the individual during a one-step synchronization process. However, in 2008 new computers were loaded with Windows VISTA, which was not compatible with CMS2. This necessitated the development of a web based CMS program, CMS Web. This program will be rolled out in 2010. It will not require a synchronization process and data queries will be more concise.

The ten most common violations for 2010 in order of prevalence are fishing without a license, failure to provide proper safety equipment on watercraft, false statements to procure a license or game tag, trespass, waste of game animal, failure to tag or register a big or trophy game animal, failure to purchase a conservation stamp, hunt in wrong area, wanton destruction of big or trophy game animal and accessory before or after the fact. In 2009 law enforcement personnel discovered 5,538 violations. This is a three percent increase from the number of violations discovered in 2008.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to evaluate the location and duties of game wardens and senior game wardens to ensure enforcement needs are being addressed.
- Continue to use a task force approach to address chronic, high profile or newly emerging enforcement issues.
- Continue to compare data in the Wildlife Violator Compact data with Department license information on a routine basis.
- Work with the technology division to develop a CMS program that is compatible with Windows VISTA and includes the desired enhancements of CMS2.

Performance Measure #3: The percentage of damage claims received/processed each year in accordance with Wyoming statutes and Commission regulations (Personnel in this program will work to ensure that 100% of damage claims are processed accordingly).



Story behind the performance:

Wyoming statutes require that the Department, through regional terrestrial wildlife personnel, address damages by big game, trophy game and game birds. Addressing damage is completed by several methods including providing damage prevention materials, moving or removing the offending wildlife, setting seasons to reduce the number of animals in an area, doing habitat improvement projects or paying monetary compensation for damages caused by the wildlife. Damage prevention and evaluation work by regional terrestrial wildlife personnel varies statewide and is greatly influenced by species present and environmental conditions.

Since FY 05 100 percent of all damage claims received are processed each year in accordance with Wyoming statutes and Commission regulations. Damage claim numbers fluctuate yearly

based on many factors including weather severity, drought, population levels and mitigation measures by the Department. Considerable efforts are made by Department personnel to prevent damage including hazing, zon guns, providing materials for stackyard fences, relocating trophy game animals, increasing harvest, depredation seasons, and as a last resort, “kill” permits. Department personnel work to educate landowners and process damage claims.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to work with landowners to mitigate damages by providing damage materials, moving or removing the offending animals, educating landowners, and processing damage claims.

Program: Specialized Statewide Law Enforcement

Division: Wildlife

Mission Statement: To provide support for Boating Safety and Stop Poaching programs throughout the state. To provide for specialized wildlife law enforcement investigations, issuance of permits and record keeping to all wildlife regions.

Program Facts: The Specialized Statewide Law Enforcement program is made up of two major sub-programs, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-programs</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Law Enforcement Administration & Boating Safety	3.0	\$ 433,342**
Law Enforcement Investigative Unit	<u>7.0</u>	<u>730,609</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	10.0	\$ 1,163,951

** Includes permanent positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

*** Does not include federal cost share dollars.*

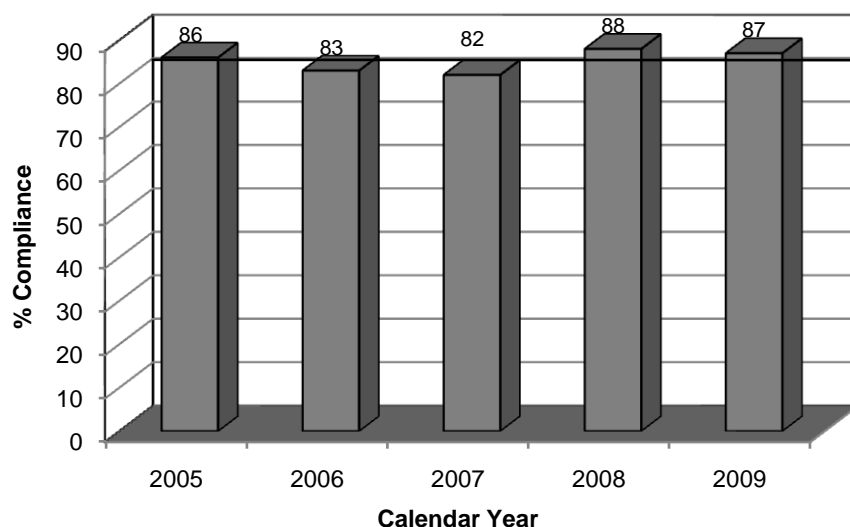
The program is located statewide with personnel in Jackson, Green River, Cody, Sheridan, Laramie, Lander, Casper, and Cheyenne. These positions coordinate all the law enforcement programs and law enforcement reporting systems and administer the boating safety and stop poaching programs for the Department.

Primary Functions of the Specialized Statewide Law Enforcement Program:

- **Provide support for Boating Safety Education and Enforcement** by providing boating safety courses for the public and providing boating safety enforcement on the State’s waterways

- **Provide support for the Stop Poaching Program** *by* increasing public involvement in detecting and reporting wildlife violators and by providing rewards for information relating to crimes against.
- **Provide for specialized Wildlife Law Enforcement Investigations** *through* the detection, apprehension and prosecution of wildlife law violators via complex multi-suspect, multi-jurisdictional investigations.
- **Provide for overall Law Enforcement Administration** *by* handling permits, law enforcement record keeping, and routine law enforcement administration.

Performance Measure #1: Watercraft safety compliance rate as documented by wildlife law enforcement technician annual reports. (Personnel in this program will work to achieve an 80 percent compliance rate).



The Department is responsible for providing boating safety and education information to the public. Wyoming experiences fatalities to boaters each year as a result lack of life jacket use. Wyoming boaters are spread out among large reservoirs, rivers, small lakes and ponds across the state making it difficult to address all their boating safety needs. Limitations on law enforcement personnel time, and sometimes location, create a unique situation in addressing boating safety and education on a statewide basis. Responsibility for educating the public about boating safety, and the enforcement of boating safety laws and regulations, lies with the game wardens, senior game wardens, and wildlife administration.

During 2009, up to six game wardens each spent approximately five man-months of time on watercraft safety and enforcement duties. Funding is received annually from the U.S. Coast Guard to assist with this effort.

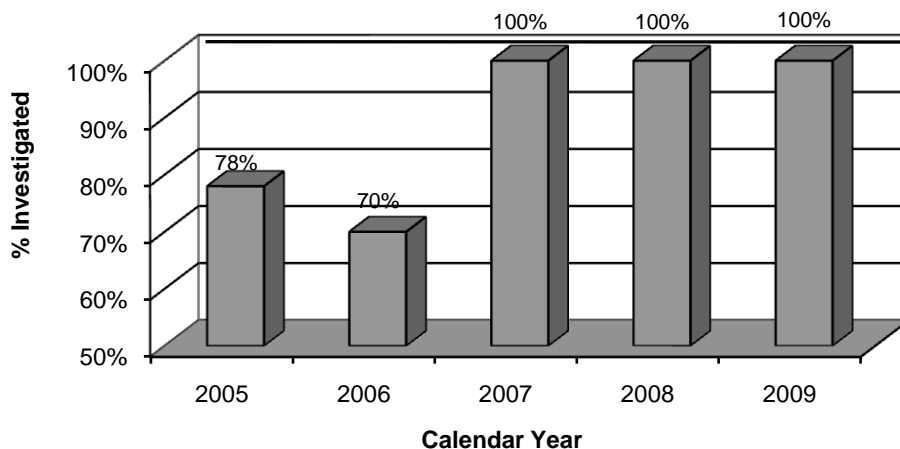
Since 2005 the average compliance rate has been 85 percent. Of the last five years, the highest compliance rate was achieved in 2008 with an 88 percent compliance rate and 2007 had the lowest compliance rate with 84 percent. The watercraft regulations with the lowest rate of compliance for 2009, in order of prevalence, were: fail to provide life jackets, fail to provide throwable flotation device, fail to provide fire extinguisher, and operate unnumbered watercraft.

Enforcement officers spent a total of 6,510 hours on boating safety. This included time spent on law enforcement, safety and education programs, and search and rescue events. Officers responded to and investigated twenty-two accidents. In 2010, a new Wyoming statute became effective requiring watercraft to be titled upon a change of ownership. The Department worked together with Wyoming Department of Transportation and county clerks to ensure accurate watercraft titling.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to increase the availability of boating safety courses to the public by utilizing Internet course providers.
- Continue to administer a proactive boating safety program through public service announcements, boating education courses, and enforcement programs.
- Coordinate with U. S. Coast Guard to continue funding provided for the Department's recreational boating safety program.
- Annual evaluations are conducted on our boating safety program to maximize our education and enforcement efforts. Game wardens compile annual reports and statistics covering their boating season enforcement efforts.
- Continue a statewide inventory and evaluation of all regulatory buoys to ensure safe boating. Replace badly worn buoys before the 2011 boating season.
- Continue to work with Wyoming Department of Transportation and county clerks to ensure accurate watercraft titling.

Performance Measure #2: The Percentage of Stop Poaching tips, received through the hotline, that are investigated. (Personnel in this program will work to investigate 100 percent of tips received through the hotline).



Story behind the performance:

Wildlife crimes often go undetected due to the remote locations where they take place. Wildlife law enforcement officers conduct routine patrols for violators, but cannot be in every location to prevent all crimes. The wildlife of this state belongs to the people of this state, and it is paramount that the public assists our officers in apprehending wildlife violators.

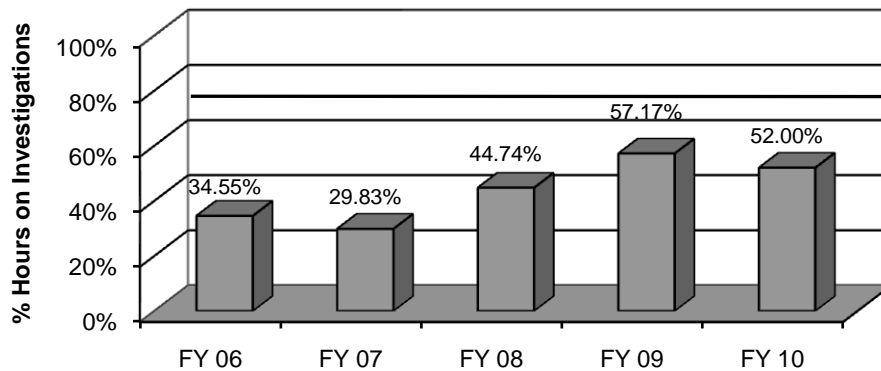
The Stop Poaching program is based on a calendar year. During the five years prior to 2009, an average of 468 poaching reports were received, 279 cases closed, \$88,489 in fines/restitutions paid, and \$6,960 in rewards paid annually. These reports and subsequent cases are all a direct result of the Department's Stop Poaching Hotline. During 2009, there were a total of 391 Stop Poaching reports documented and all reports were investigated although some reports remain under investigation. Of these reports, enforcement actions resulted in 279 closed cases. A total of \$131,596 in fines/restitutions was paid to county courts and \$10,850 in rewards was paid to informants during 2009. Stop Poaching Hotline calls are answered by SALECS dispatchers. During 2008 the SALECS dispatch center was moved to a new location and a new phone system was installed at the dispatch center. The new phone system does not accurately track the numbers of Stop Poaching calls received. A new tracking method was instituted in 2009 and more accurately reflect the number of calls received. These problems did not affect the tracking of rewards and fines/restitutions.

Fines and restitution vary widely from year to year due to the severity of the crimes committed and the sentences handed out by the courts. On occasion, a single case will result in several thousand dollars being paid out in fines/restitution. The amount of fines/restitution paid in 2009 was the second highest in the history of the program and the amount of rewards paid were the fifth highest in the history of the program.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to provide a 24-hour hotline for the public to report wildlife violators.
- Continue to approve monetary rewards and to provide certificates of appreciation for those people who turn in wildlife violators.
- Continue to increase awareness of this program through tailgate decals on Department vehicles advertising the Stop Poaching phone number. Promotional items will again be purchased and distributed to advertise the Stop Poaching program and toll-free hotline.
- Continue to monitor the SALECS tracking system of the Stop Poaching Hotline to ensure that calls are being accurately documented. Work toward a better phone system that accurately tracks the Stop Poaching calls.
- Ensure that the Stop Poaching toll-free number, out of state long distance number, and the Stop Poaching web link appear on all Commission Regulation booklets.
- Evaluate the possibility of enacting a text message reporting system. Stop Poaching tips would be sent in via text messages to SALECS and dispatched to the appropriate officer.

Performance Measure #3: Percentage of time spent on law enforcement/case investigations by the Investigative Unit. (Personnel in this program will work to spend 70 percent of their time working on investigations).



Story behind the performance:

The Law Enforcement Investigative Unit is comprised of six full-time Wildlife Investigators stationed at or near regional offices. However, the Pinedale/Jackson Investigator position has been vacant for all of this fiscal reporting year. The Unit is supervised by one supervisor/investigator stationed at the Casper Regional Office. Unit members operate with unmarked vehicles and typically out of uniform. Personnel are equipped with modern evidence, surveillance, tracking, and other equipment.

The Unit initiates many cases, but the bulk of cases are referred from District Wardens and other sources. The Unit conducts investigations that are generally complex, long-term wildlife violation cases utilizing specialized methods and equipment and beyond the time commitment Wardens can devote. Cases may be overt or covert in nature and are selected based on established priorities.

The Unit also carries a large “assisted” caseload. They assist Wardens from Wyoming, as well as other jurisdictions including the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Most of these cases take a great deal of time and can be active for several years. Each case may contain many defendants and many charges/violations. The Unit also has a large number of cases that are not worked due to time constraints and priorities.

Since FY 06, an average of 6,169 investigative hours were completed annually. In FY 10, the Unit was involved in hundreds of cases of all sizes and spent 6,885 hours investigating cases. Several undercover cases have also been worked.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to aggressively investigate wildlife violations.
- Develop and utilize innovative techniques and technology to assist with our mission.
- The Unit will seek updated surveillance equipment for investigations and provide training to investigators in information technology based crime and the latest in information technology forensics. The Unit will also work with the electronic licensing program in this regard.

- Continue to evaluate Investigator duties and focus on major investigations thru supervision and quarterly Investigative Unit meetings.
- Fill the vacant Pinedale/Jackson Investigator position when the hiring freeze is lifted.

Program: Statewide Terrestrial Wildlife Management

Division: Wildlife

Mission: Lead specialized, statewide conservation and management of native terrestrial wildlife species, and assist with regional management of resident game species.

Program Facts: The Statewide Terrestrial Wildlife Management program is made up of seven major sub-programs, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget.

<u>Sub-programs</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Biological Services	6.5	\$ 971,063
Terrestrial Nongame (CWCS)	10.2	870,167
Migratory Game Bird (Waterfowl)	1.0	154,897
Trophy Game Mgmt. & Research	4.5	494,649
Trophy Game Conflict Resolution	6.7	650,092
Sage-Grouse Conservation	2.0	1,416,065
Predator Management	<u>0.0</u>	<u>100,000</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	30.9	\$4,656,933

** Includes permanent and contract positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

The sub-programs that comprise the Statewide Terrestrial Wildlife Management program were previously part of the Terrestrial Wildlife Management program (Strategic Plan FY 04-FY 07, November 2003). The Migratory Game Bird sub-program was previously referred to as the Waterfowl sub-program. The Trophy Game Management and Research sub-program was previously referred to as the Trophy Game sub-program. In addition, the Sage-Grouse Conservation sub-program was created and added as its own sub-program.

This program has statewide responsibilities that are based in various locations throughout the state.

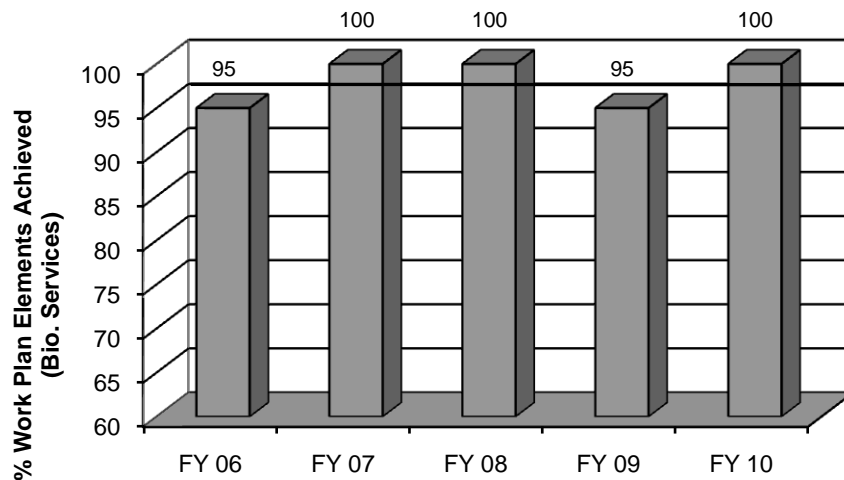
Primary Functions of the Statewide Terrestrial Wildlife Management Program:

- **Assist with recovery and conservation of species that are threatened, endangered or in greatest conservation need** by developing and implementing plans and strategies, providing technical and financial assistance, collecting data, coordinating with other agencies and organizations, and conducting research.
- **Participate in statewide terrestrial wildlife management** by providing policy, data and environmental analyses, planning and evaluation, data collection, and trophy game conflict

resolution; by compiling and administering statewide management data; and by representing the division or agency in multi-disciplinary and multi-organization conservation and management efforts.

- **Contribute to harvest management of game species** by conducting annual harvest surveys, compiling and analyzing harvest information; making recommendations on harvest strategies; and interstate coordination.
- **Serve internal and external customers** by providing and interpreting data, disseminating information about wildlife and its management, and providing additional related services.

Performance Measure #1: Biological Services - Major work plan elements achieved (Personnel in this program will work to complete at least 95 percent of the major work elements which are planned for a single year).



Story behind the performance:

The number of major work plan elements achieved continues to be the measure of Biological Services' annual performance. In recent years, major work plan elements have ranged between 18 and 21 annually. These work elements are selected based on the importance of the particular products and services Biological Services provides to the internal and external customers.

Over the past five years, Biological Services has completed an average of 98 percent of its major work plan elements. In FY 10, 100 percent (19 of 19) of the major work plan elements were completed. While our record of completing major work plan elements is good, accomplishing them can be a challenge because the section is often assigned a number of unplanned, urgent, high priority items each year by wildlife administration and/or the director's office. Section personnel include some latitude in their annual work schedules in anticipation of these unplanned assignments.

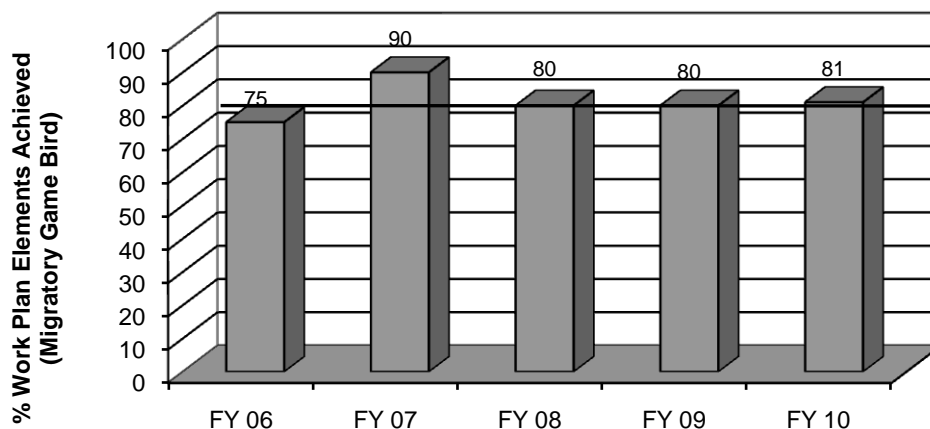
In FY 10, significant unplanned work elements included preparing compilations of big game management statistics for various purposes and completing pending items assigned to the section by administration. The Cheyenne Staff Biologist was required to continue helping with policy, regulation and document reviews again this year.

Major work plan elements identified annually constitute a large percentage of, but not all, the duties and tasks for which the Section is responsible. Each is important to someone, and in some cases, is significant to a broad range of internal and external customers.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to develop work schedules for section personnel that address essential and high priority functions while allowing time to accommodate unplanned assignments.
- Improve JCR software and the instruction manual to help regional personnel produce JCR reports in final form requiring minimal corrections prior to publication.
- Continue to cross-train on several databases the section maintains.
- Continue exploring ways to streamline surveys, reports, and other products, in order, to make them more efficient and useful.
- Continue to reduce printing costs and improve internal communications by posting WGFD publications and users manuals on the website.
- Continue to update and maintain the Wildlife Observation System program.

Performance Measure #2: Migratory Game Bird - Major work plan elements achieved (Personnel in this program will work to complete at least 75 percent of the major work elements which are planned for a single year).



Story behind the performance:

This sub-program was formerly called “Waterfowl Management”. Major annual work plan elements for the Migratory Game Bird sub-program include: population surveys, harvest surveys, hunting season recommendations, Central and Pacific Flyway Technical Committee functions and responsibilities, Bump-Sullivan Managed Goose Hunt, budget preparation, dissemination of information, recommending protection/mitigation for migratory game bird habitat, annual completion reports, and management of goose nesting structures.

Annual work plan elements are identified by program personnel prior to the fiscal year. The number of major work plan elements achieved has been the sole measure of the sub-program’s performance. Work plan elements primarily reflect the duties within the scope and mission of the sub-program, and are vital to managing migratory game birds at state and interstate scales. Since FY 06, the Migratory Game Bird Management sub-program completed an average of 81

percent of its annual major work plan elements. In FY 10, 80 percent (eight of ten) of the major annual work plan elements (and 90 percent of the minor work plan elements) were completed. Of the ten major work plan elements, one was not attainable due to drought and lack of water in Bump-Sullivan Reservoir. The other element not achieved was management of goose nesting structures, which was omitted due to higher priority tasks.

Duties for the Pacific Flyway are divided among the Migratory Game Bird Biologist, Jackson Nongame Bird Biologist and the Alpine Staff Biologist. The Migratory Game Bird Biologist, and with assistance of the Nongame Bird Biologist, conducts several surveys of migratory game birds. The Alpine Staff Biologist represents the Department at the Pacific Flyway Technical Committee meetings and prepares recommendations for migratory game bird hunting seasons in the Pacific Flyway in collaboration with the Migratory Game Bird Biologist.

In FY 10, banding was eliminated from the list of priority work plan elements. However, the Migratory Game Bird Section is providing financial support through the Central Flyway Council to help fund a preseason duck banding effort being carried out in the Central Flyway.

Another priority is to maintain and evaluate over 800 goose nesting structures throughout the state. In response to reductions in personnel and funding, and considering the breeding population of Canada geese in Wyoming has increased 32 percent over the past 20 years, the Department is evaluating the need and ability to annually replace bedding and maintain the structures. Less effective structures, on which geese don't regularly nest, are being eliminated where possible.

The Migratory Game Bird Section participates in cooperative annual surveys to estimate waterfowl populations and provides information necessary for setting waterfowl seasons. Surveys include the September crane, mid-winter waterfowl, Canada goose winter classification, and Canada goose breeding surveys. In addition, a goose molting survey is conducted every fifth year.

The Migratory Game Bird Section remains strongly committed to migratory game bird management through the national flyway system. The Section's involvement includes development and revision of management plans for the various migratory game bird populations, providing input on policy decisions, setting annual hunting seasons, and producing annual job completion reports for hunted populations in both the Central and Pacific Flyways. These processes require representatives from Wyoming to participate in the Flyway Technical Committee meetings held annually in December/January, March and July.

The Migratory Game Bird Section is also directly or indirectly involved in management of migratory nongame birds in the two Flyways. For example, the section has been increasingly involved with trumpeter swan management.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

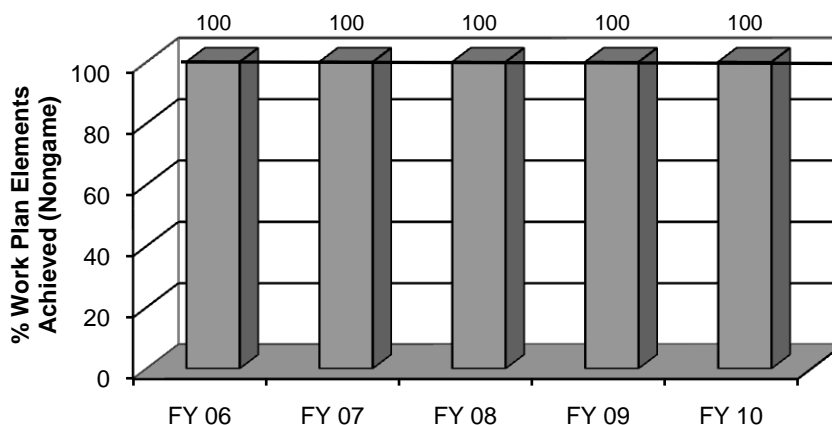
- Prioritize work elements; some work simply will not get done due to staffing limitations and other demands. Explore ways to streamline and economize the existing workload where possible.

- Improve coordination and communication with other Department personnel whose duties may have some bearing on goals and objectives of the Migratory Game Bird Section, and with those personnel who are occasionally requested to assist with surveys and other functions.
- Investigate options to secure additional technical and clerical assistance (e.g., student volunteers, outside funding).
- Continue to justify the need for another full-time Migratory Game Bird biologist to cover the western (Pacific Flyway) portion of the state.
- Continue to plan work schedules to accomplish those tasks that can be anticipated and accommodate unplanned assignments, possibly by deemphasizing some of the less critical work elements.

Data development agenda:

The number of work elements achieved annually may not be an ideal measure of success, but seems to provide the most practical approach given the diversity of duties within the sub-program. An alternative would be the annual number of (hunter) recreation days supported by the migratory game bird sub-program. However, many factors outside the influence of Migratory Game Bird sub-program personnel can affect that metric, for example, bird production and survival in other parts of the continent, weather during the migration period, and changes in the federal hunting season frameworks. As well, the number of recreation days is only one of the outputs that might be important to the external customers of this sub-program.

Performance Measure #3: Nongame – Major work plan elements achieved (Personnel in this program will work to complete at least 95 percent of the major work elements which are planned for a single year).



Story behind the performance:

This sub-program is responsible for monitoring, management and dissemination of information on over 300 species of birds and 100 species of mammals.

Major work plan elements include strategy administration and planning; monitoring population trends of bald eagles, peregrine falcons, trumpeter swans, common loons, colonial nesting water birds; coordination of Partners in Flight and Wyoming Bird Records committee; black-footed ferret reintroduction and monitoring; inventory of bats and associated habitats; swift fox surveys;

raptor surveys in eastern Wyoming; completion of State Wildlife Grants projects, and reports and dissemination of information. Grassland ecosystem monitoring and management planning to assist with implementation of the State's Wildlife Action Plan were recently added as major elements.

A limited number of elements can be reasonably completed with existing personnel. Funding will never be sufficient to address all species or management concerns and the strategy consistently faces a large discrepancy between work that needs to be accomplished and work that can be accomplished. The increase in the number of species proposed for listing and the need to work on many of these before listing has greatly increased workloads. New state funding from the general fund and the Governor's budget along with Federal appropriations, such as State Wildlife Grants have been extremely helpful for initiating new projects through grants and contracts. However, the long-term effectiveness of additional funding is limited by restrictions on additional permanent personnel and the short-term or inconsistent nature of funding.

The bird and mammal inventory and monitoring plan was continued and includes several levels of monitoring intensity. In FY 10, annual monitoring of population trends was conducted on species such as the bald eagle, common loon, long-billed curlew, peregrine falcon, trumpeter swan, and black-footed ferret. Species with baseline data and repeated surveys every three to five years were surveyed and included colonial waterbirds, several species of bats, and swift fox. Monitoring efforts that serve as a coarse filter for early detection of birds that may need to be included in Wyoming's species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) list continued. This effort included 63 roadside breeding bird survey routes, 168 point count transects, and several riparian transects and one banding station.

As identified in the SWAP, recovery efforts for the black-footed ferret continued and included habitat mapping and monitoring a portion of the ferret population. In FY 10, ferret surveys focused on areas outside of the habitat known to be occupied by ferrets. Approximately 334 personnel hours resulted in 12 observations documenting that ferrets continue to expand their range and now occupy more prairie dog colonies than previously estimated.

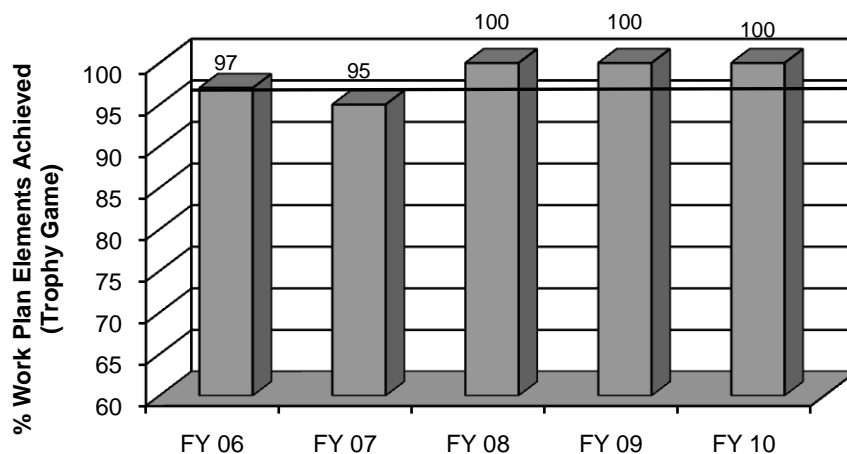
Progress continued on the Department's Green River Basin Trumpeter Swan Summer Habitat Planning Project (State Wildlife Grant 2003-2004) to develop habitat for the expanding population. Monitoring of completed swan wetland habitat projects on private lands in the Green River basin is ongoing and preliminary work that allows for the initiation of an additional wetland project was completed. Along with the new funding sources, the necessary planning and administration allowed for the initiation of numerous grants and contracts to collect more baseline information on: sagebrush bird and mammal obligates, nesting raptors, expanded statewide grid sampling for birds, initiating a monitoring program for important bird areas, an evaluation of the ferruginous hawk population status, Wyoming pocket gopher, pygmy rabbits, Preble's meadow jumping mouse and baseline inventories of small mammals in Thunder Basin.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Increase efforts for implementation planning to assure that high priority major work plan elements are attained while accommodating short-term projects.
- Focus on writing proposals and attaining long-term funding allowing for necessary planning.

- Continue to seek additional permanent positions through legislative and other long-term funding.
- Continue to build a reliable base of volunteers and suitable projects through outreach to conservation organizations and schools.

Performance Measure #4: Trophy Game Management and Research – Major work plan elements achieved (Personnel in this program will work to complete at least 95 percent of the major work elements which are planned for a single year).



Story behind the performance:

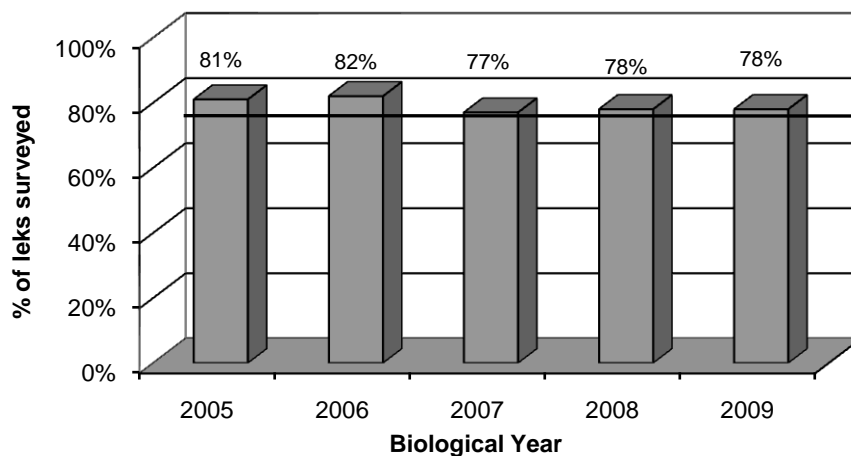
The primary measure of this sub-program's performance has been the number of major work plan elements that have been achieved annually. These work plan elements include: annual grizzly bear observation surveys; aerial monitoring of radio collared bears; research trapping; continued implementation of alternative methods of grizzly bear population monitoring; management of multiple databases for grizzly bears; analysis of annual black bear and mountain lion harvest data and management of the databases for this information; public meetings addressing black bear and mountain lion management practices; meetings with regional Department personnel to address black bear and mountain lion harvest; analysis findings and development of dialogue relative to season setting processes; participating on the Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team (IGBST); fulfilling information requests; preparation of various annual reports; and implementation of new monitoring techniques. All (100 percent) of the annual work plan elements have been met each year. Several additional work elements were completed this fiscal year that were not initially identified. This branch has to contend with numerous unplanned, higher priority assignments from the administration. There is typically little latitude to adjust section personnel's assignments. While we do anticipate several unplanned events annually, the frequency and number cannot be predicted.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to meet with regions related to black bear and mountain lion management issues.
- Continue to educate the public, as well as, Department personnel on the fundamentals of trophy game ecology and management in Wyoming and the function of the trophy game section.

- Continue to develop potential research efforts assessing black bear and mountain lion ecology and management issues within and beyond Wyoming.
- Continue to develop allocation process for grizzly bear hunting allocations.
- Explore options for annual reporting and collection of grizzly bear data.

Performance Measure #5: Percentage of known leks surveyed. (Personnel in this program will work to survey at least 75 percent of the known sage-grouse leks).



Story behind the performance:

As of the spring of 2010 (end of biological year 2009) there were approximately 2,025 known occupied sage-grouse leks. Department personnel, together with personnel from other agencies, volunteers and consultants, surveyed 78 percent of these leks at least once. The proportion of leks checked in the previous 10 years (biological years 2000-2009) averaged 75 percent.

The Wyoming Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan (2003) established an objective of a minimum of 1,650 known occupied leks. Monitoring sage-grouse population trends requires knowledge of the location of all or most leks along with the average number of males attending the leks each year. While it is presumed the location of most leks is known, new leks are discovered each year. The effort to monitor sage-grouse population trends has increased dramatically since 1998 and therefore, the number of known occupied leks, as well as the proportion of leks surveyed has increased. However, the numbers of inactive and unoccupied leks is increasing due to continued habitat disturbance and fragmentation primarily associated with increasing human infrastructure (subdivisions, roads, power lines, gas wells, compressor stations, etc.) and the associated activity. These impacts are being increasingly documented and quantified by research in Wyoming.

The Wyoming Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation Plan (2003) also established an objective of an average “count” of 28 males/lek, not to fall below 10 males/lek during cyclical lows. The average number of male sage-grouse observed on leks also indicates population trend if the number of leks is stable. From biological years 1999-2003 the number of known occupied leks increased due to increased monitoring effort. At the same time the average number of males observed decreased, in large part due to drought, but also due to increasing disturbance and

fragmentation associated with natural gas development. In biological years 2004-2005, the average number of males/lek increased at least in part because of timely spring precipitation that resulted in a large hatch and high survival of chicks. Most of the increase occurred in habitats relatively undeveloped with human infrastructure. The return of drought conditions in calendar years 2006 and 2007 contributed to declining sage-grouse numbers over the last four years. In the spring of 2010, the average number of males on “count” leks was 20, down from the recent high of 46/lek in the spring of 2006 but substantially higher than the low of nine/lek reported in 1995. Monitoring and research suggests sage-grouse populations cycle; similar to rabbits.

In December 2007 a federal District Court judge ordered the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to reconsider its 2005 decision of “not warranted” for listing Greater Sage-grouse as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. On March 5, 2010 the USFWS issued its new decision of “warranted but precluded” which means Greater Sage-grouse have become a “candidate” for listing but are precluded from immediate listing due to higher priorities. This status is reviewed annually by the USFWS. In its decision document, the USFWS specifically cited Wyoming’s Core Area Strategy (described below) as a mechanism that, if implemented as envisioned, should ensure conservation of sage-grouse in Wyoming and therefore help preclude a future listing.

The eight local sage-grouse working groups established in 2004 completed preparation of their respective conservation plans in 2006 and 2007. The plans are currently being implemented utilizing Wyoming General Fund appropriations (\$2.6 million) together with other public and private funding sources. To date, approximately 100 individual projects have been implemented to benefit sage-grouse ranging from on-the-ground habitat improvements, applied research, monitoring, and public outreach. While the recent sage-grouse population trends cannot be attributed to these projects, long-term monitoring will ultimately measure their effectiveness. Additional projects will be implemented over the current biennium as a result of new General Fund appropriations (\$1.1 million).

In an unprecedented move to coordinate sage-grouse conservation efforts across the State of Wyoming, Governor Dave Freudenthal utilized the recommendations from his Sage-Grouse Implementation Team and released an Executive Order on Aug. 1, 2008 that directed state agencies to work to maintain and enhance greater sage-grouse habitat in Wyoming. These actions constituted Wyoming’s Core Area Strategy. Following the updates prepared during the spring and summer of 2010 by the Implementation Team, Governor Freudenthal issued a new Executive Order on August 18, 2010 to replace that from 2008. Implementation of the Executive Order and core area management concept has resulted in state and federal agency policy and stipulation changes, modifications of projects being implemented by the oil and gas industry and curtailment or modification of some wind energy developments.

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department and Commission maintain management authority over candidate species and management emphasis will continue to focus on implementation of Wyoming’s Core Area Strategy.

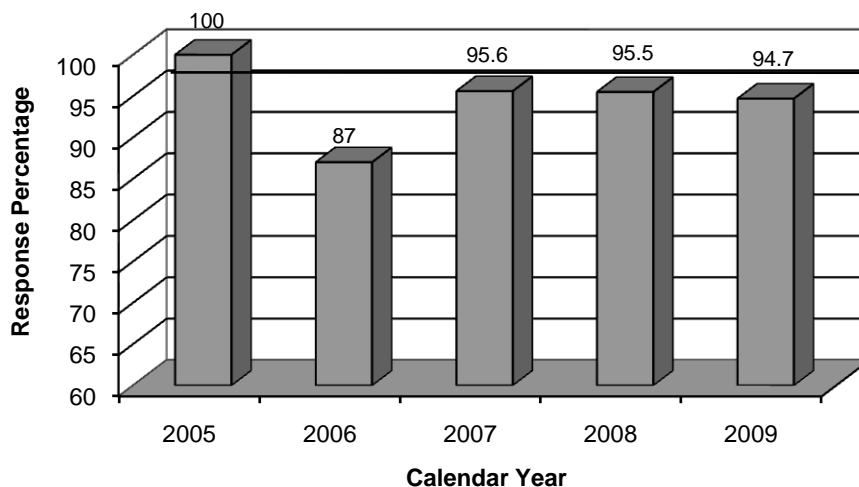
What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- While weather events and the nation's energy policy will greatly determine future trends in Wyoming's sage-grouse population, efforts to proactively manage sage-grouse and their habitats will continue via implementation of the eight local working group plans and the Core Area Management Strategy.
- The Department's sage-grouse database is currently being revised and upgraded in order to improve accuracy of the data and efficiency for those collecting, entering, reporting and utilizing the data. This revision should be complete and in use during 2011.
- Statewide sage-grouse seasonal habitat mapping is underway. The results of this effort will greatly enhance management of sage-grouse by better indentifying locations that would or would not benefit from habitat protection and/or enhancement.

Data development agenda:

While the number of occupied leks and average males/lek provides sage-grouse population trend information, it does not provide a statistically defensible population estimate. Efforts are underway within the WAFWA Sage-grouse Technical Committee to develop better population estimation techniques.

Performance Measure #6: Trophy Game Conflict Management – Conflict response rate (Personnel in this program will respond to 95 percent of trophy game/human conflicts).

**Story behind the performance:**

The measure of this sub-program's performance has been the response rate to the number of reported conflicts between trophy game animals and humans. Actions involved in responding to trophy game conflicts vary by incident type and severity, but may include relocating animals, removing animals, preventative measures, education, monitoring, investigation, or no action. Since 2005, the Trophy Game Conflict Management Section has responded to an average of 93.3 percent of the conflicts reported by the public. Some conflicts are reported well beyond the time when a response is appropriate and are only logged into the database. Because the section spends a great deal of time responding to conflicts, the number and nature of which are difficult to predict, personnel allow for a certain amount of uncommitted time in their annual work schedules, especially during the black and grizzly bear non-denning period. The number of

conflicts managed annually constitutes a large percentage of, but not all, the duties and tasks for which the section is responsible.

The section responded to 94.7 percent (n=179) of reported (n=189) conflicts between humans and black bears, grizzly bears, gray wolves, and mountain lions during the reporting period. The section investigated, managed or mitigated all conflicts where a response was appropriate. Some conflicts are reported long after the incident making a site response unnecessary.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to respond to and manage the majority of conflicts reported by the public.
- Accommodate unplanned assignments.

Program: Strategic Management

Division: Services

Mission Statement: Facilitate the Department's ability to make informed wildlife conservation decisions and serve its publics through improved planning efforts and management effectiveness.

Program Facts: The Strategic Management program is made up of one major sub-program, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-program</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Strategic Management	1.0	\$133,198

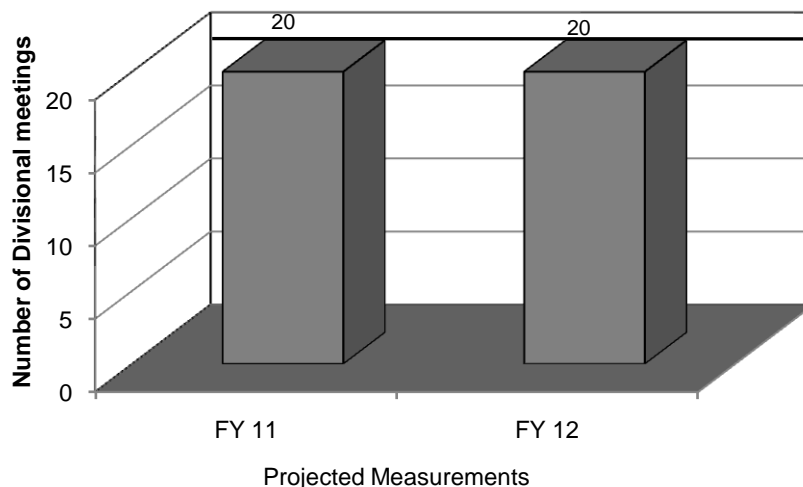
**Includes permanent and contract positions authorized in FY 10 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

This program is located in the Department Headquarters Office in Cheyenne.

Primary Functions of the Strategic Management Program:

- **Facilitate the Department's ability to make informed wildlife conservation decisions** *through* improved future planning efforts. By working inter-divisionally to identify and plan social science needs, improve the inclusion of public input in management decisions.
- **Facilitate the Department's ability to make informed wildlife conservation decisions** *through* improved management effectiveness. By applying social sciences to natural resource-related issues, improve the Department's ability to identify and understand a diverse group of stakeholders, thus leading to more informed and publicly supported management decisions.

Performance Measure #1: Quarterly meetings held with divisions to determine data needs (Personnel in this program will work to ensure that at least 20 meetings are held each year).



Story behind the performance:

The Strategic Management Coordinator works closely with other divisions within the Department to measure public satisfaction, Department effectiveness, public support, and trend forecasting. This position is transitioning to focus solely on human dimensions research, and will hence be called the Human Dimensions Coordinator (HDC). Human dimensions is the study of how people think about, relate to, and act toward wildlife, and the effect that has on their decision making regarding natural resource issues. The HDC is heavily involved in public involvement and input for certain issues within the Department. Receiving feedback from Departmental personnel regarding these services is critical in maintaining high quality products that meet the needs of the Department, and ultimately the demands of the public the Department serves.

Human dimensions projects involving collaboration with field personnel and personnel at the Cheyenne headquarters have increased in the time that emphasis has been placed on human dimensions research. This has allowed the HDC to become better acquainted with many Departmental programs and functions and has enabled personnel to become more familiar with the information human dimensions research can provide. Each year the HDC works with each division and the Director's Office to identify and prioritize projects in preparation for the upcoming fiscal year. However, additional projects assigned throughout the year and the expansion in scope of ongoing projects increase the workload and may hinder the ability to move to other prioritized projects. For this reason, communication with the divisions about the status of projects will remain important. As priorities change throughout the year, the HDC will meet with division personnel to discuss the status of projects and any change in the timing of their completion.

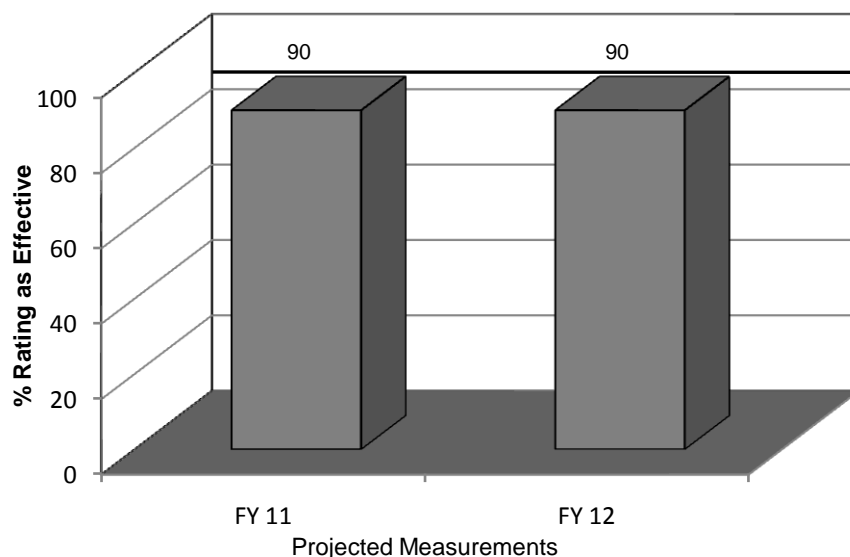
What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Continue to create a prioritized list of projects for each year, created jointly with Department administration. Work with Division administration to ensure practical timelines and priorities based on workload constraints. When other tasks are assigned that were not originally on the

prioritized list, examine their level of importance and reevaluate the list. Should it be determined that the proposed task is not a priority, or if the proposed task will take priority over other planned projects, in a timely and professional manner, clearly explain to requesting personnel the implications of new projects. This effort should maintain communication between the Human Dimensions Coordinator and Department personnel.

- Develop methods for creating anticipated timelines for each human dimensions project in order to aid in the prioritization of projects and recurring Departmental needs.

Performance Measure #2: Data gathered and analyzed from surveys is used by the divisions to help strategic management decisions. Feedback received from Divisions will be used to determine effectiveness of the data gathered. (Personnel in this program will work to ensure that divisions rate 90% of gathered data as effective.)



Story behind the performance:

Surveys assessing public attitudes and opinions toward wildlife and fish management must be developed in a way that is meaningful to wildlife managers. Equally as important as coordination on projects to be implemented by the Human Dimensions program is the coordination of the study itself. By working with Division personnel, the HDC can ensure that the questions asked will be of use and directly applicable to management decisions. Continual communication with Division personnel at all levels will also help in the development of questions that are easily understandable by a broad range of publics. The HDC will work with Divisions to strategically plan survey content so that questions of interest to a management decision are covered in detail. By identifying the overarching study question(s), the HDC can develop questions that effectively and thoroughly explore the topic area. This collaboration will aid in the continual improvement of human dimensions studies and their role in wildlife management.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Develop a feedback loop for each human dimensions project. Identify personnel at the beginning of project development for feedback relative to each project in order to assess

levels of timeliness and service throughout the fiscal year, and make corrections where needed on ensuing projects. This will allow for improved services based directly on the needs of the personnel with whom the HDC works most often.

Program: Support Facilities and Personnel

Division: Fiscal and Services Division

Mission: Provide adequate administrative support services and workspace for Cheyenne headquarters and regional office personnel in Department facilities.

Program Facts: The Support Facilities and Personnel Program is listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-programs</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Regional Office Management	20.0	\$ 1,324,023
Headquarters and Regional Office Buildings	<u>2.5</u>	<u>1,357,605</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	22.5	\$ 2,681,628

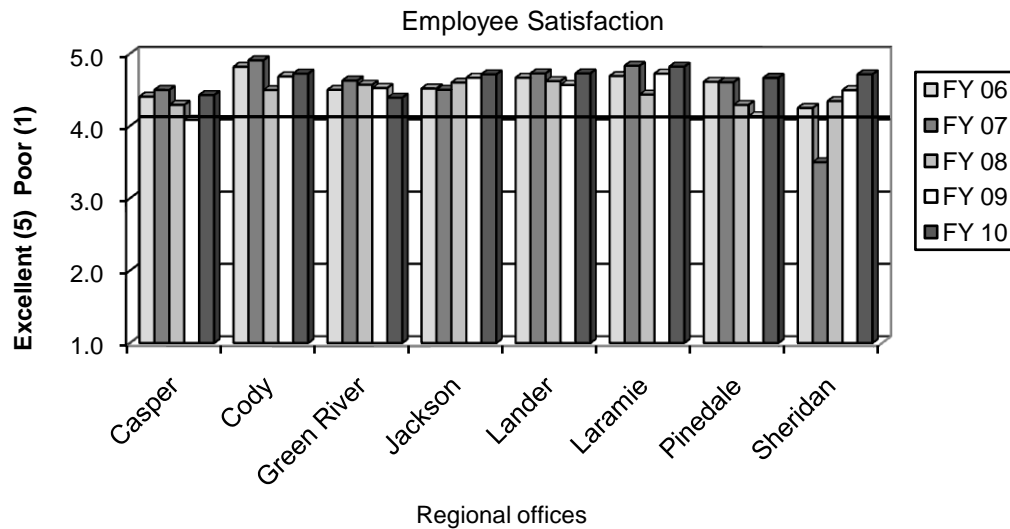
**Includes permanent, contract and temporary positions authorized in the FY 2010 budget. Any positions added during the budget cycle require Wyoming Game and Fish Commission authorization or must be funded from supplemental grants.*

This program is located in eight regional office locations statewide plus the Department Headquarters Office in Cheyenne.

Primary Functions of the Support Facilities and Personnel Program:

- **Ensure administrative support levels at regional facilities** to provide adequate clerical, logistical and financial services for field personnel so that their primary functions can be satisfactorily completed.
- **Ensure that office environments are adequate** for Department employees by ensuring routine maintenance is performed and adequate office space is provided so employees can accomplish their primary job functions.

Performance Measure #1: Employee satisfaction with level of regional office management support (Personnel in this program will work to achieve a score of at least 4.)



Story behind the performance:

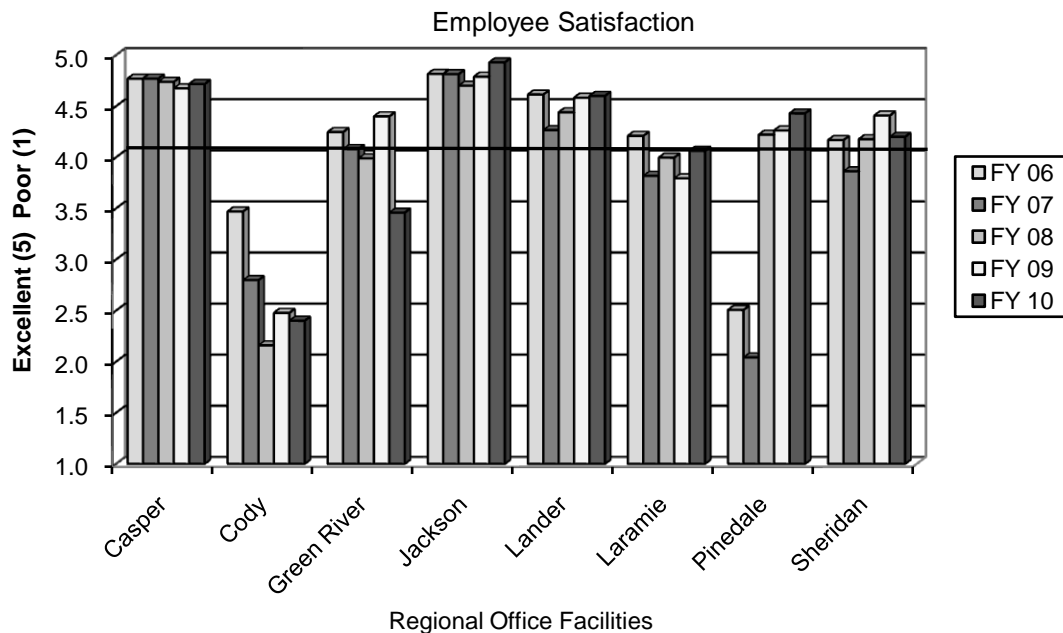
Regional office managers continued to be tasked with new challenges in FY 2010 as enhancements to the new point of sale licensing system put into place in the previous year continued. Additionally, regional office managers were an integral part of the new Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) program decal issuance process. Fortunately, regional offices did not experience turnover in permanent personnel, a key factor in predicting customer satisfaction and accordingly, overall satisfaction with regional office satisfaction increased slightly.

Employees will be surveyed annually to determine satisfaction with regional office support. Overall in FY 10, the regional offices received a score of 4.6 on a scale of 5 (excellent) to 1 (poor) based on employee satisfaction with the level of regional office management support, up from 4.5 in the previous year. The highest score 4.8 was received by the Laramie region and the lowest score 4.4 was received by the Green River office. However, 7 of the 8 regional offices scored higher in FY 10 than in any previous year and all offices scored between “good” and excellent”. Based on these survey results, the majority of regional office personnel are highly satisfied with the service levels provided by administrative personnel in their offices.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Ongoing regional team meetings with all divisions represented and with attendance from staff level personnel on an as needed basis will help to insure that all employees housed in the regional offices are being provided the level of support necessary for them to accomplish the administrative and fiscal functions within their positions.
- Regional office managers can best handle workloads if administrators review and shift priorities, if needed, on an ongoing basis so that office managers can accommodate the level of support required.

Performance Measure #2: Employee satisfaction with the workspace provided by the facility in which employees are housed (Personnel working with this program will work to ensure that each facility receives a rating of at least 4).



Story behind the performance:

During FY 08, with the assistance of legislative funding, the Department was able to replace the Pinedale regional office with a new and larger complex that previously housed the Bureau of Land Management. The only regional office in which satisfaction level is poor (2.4) is in the Cody office. At this time, all regional offices, with the exception of Cody, have either been replaced or had some type of upgrade made in the past twenty years. The Cody office, built in 1978, has limited storage and office space and with the addition of personnel in the trophy game conflict resolution area in recent years, the facility no longer has adequate space for all personnel working out of the region. Accordingly, at this time, it is the only regional office facility that personnel experienced overall dissatisfaction, due to overcrowding in the facility. Satisfaction in the Green River region also decreased to a level between neutral and good (3.46). In the last two to three years the Department has had a significant expansion in the number of seasonal temporary personnel performing fieldwork. Funding has been received for multiple sensitive species and habitat projects, necessitating this increase. While that funding has been extremely helpful in meeting Department priorities in this area, the hiring of additional personnel often results in overcrowding in these offices. The Green River office is such an example. It is believed that satisfaction levels at offices are directly proportional to the newness of the facility and amount of workspace provided for employees.

Based on an employee survey, in FY 10 the regional offices received a score of 4.1 on a scale of 5 (excellent) to 1 (poor) based on employee satisfaction with the workspace provided by the facility in which they are housed, approximately the same as in FY 09. The highest score 4.93

was received by the Jackson area, which has the newest facility, the lowest score 2.4 was received by the Cody region.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- During the 2010 legislative session, the Department requested and received capital construction funds from the legislature for a modular unit at the Cody regional office and three dry storage units at Green River, Laramie and Lander. It is anticipated that these projects will help to somewhat alleviate overcrowding issues at least on a temporary basis.
- In the next year the Department will be looking into evaluating space needs at both the Cody and Laramie office and developing a plan that may include future general fund capital construction requests for one or both of these facilities. The Cody regional office replacement/expansion remains the Department's first priority for administrative facilities. The Department wants to insure that any evaluation considers location as it relates to meeting customer needs, in addition to adequate office and storage space.

Program: Wildlife Health and Laboratory Services

Division: Services and Wildlife

Mission: Use advanced technology and laboratory procedures to enhance and protect the integrity of Wyoming's fish and wildlife resources.

Program Facts: The Wildlife Health and Laboratory Services program is made up of two major sub-programs, listed below with number of staff and 2010 (FY 10) budget:

<u>Sub-programs</u>	<u># FTEs*</u>	<u>2010 Annual Budget</u>
Laboratory Services	8.0	\$ 604,794
Veterinary Services	<u>15.0 **</u>	<u>1,879,104</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	23.0	\$ 2,483,898

** Includes permanent, contract and temporary positions authorized in the FY 10 budget.*

*** Five of these positions are federally funded; the rest of the budget is paid for by general appropriations.*

Laboratory Services is located on the University of Wyoming campus. The Laboratory section of Veterinary Services is located at the Wyoming State Veterinary Lab. The headquarters and research unit is located at the Tom Thorne and Beth Williams Wildlife Research Unit at Sybille and numerous brucellosis biologists are located in Pinedale and Jackson.

Primary Functions of the Wildlife Health and Laboratory Services Program:

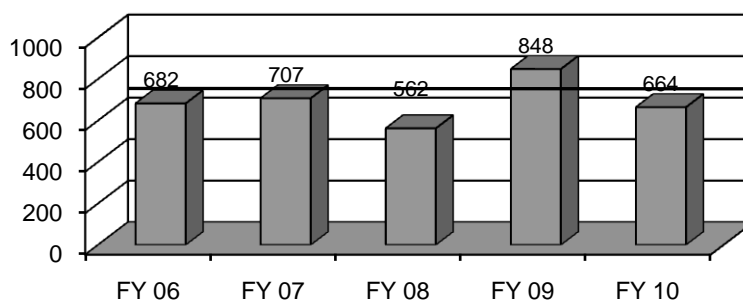
- **Enhance and protect the integrity of Wyoming's fish and wildlife resources** by monitoring, diagnosing, and reporting on diseases and implementing disease control measures for wildlife and fish species the Department has statutory authority to regulate.
- **Enhance and protect the integrity of Wyoming's fish and wildlife resources** through laboratory research, propagation, confinement, and confiscation facilities.

- **Enhance and protect the integrity of Wyoming's fish and wildlife resources** *by* providing timely and accurate information and essential laboratory and technological support in the areas of tooth aging, fish health, and wildlife forensics.

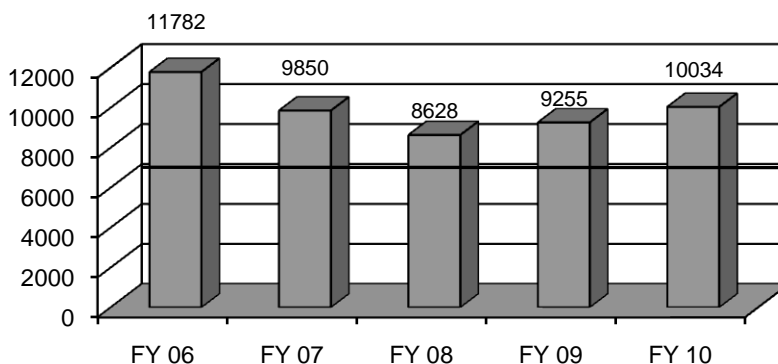
Performance Measure #1: Laboratory Productivity (Personnel in this program will maintain the capacity to receive and process at least 650 Forensic samples, 11,500 Fish Health samples, and 800 Tooth Aging samples).

Number of samples received:

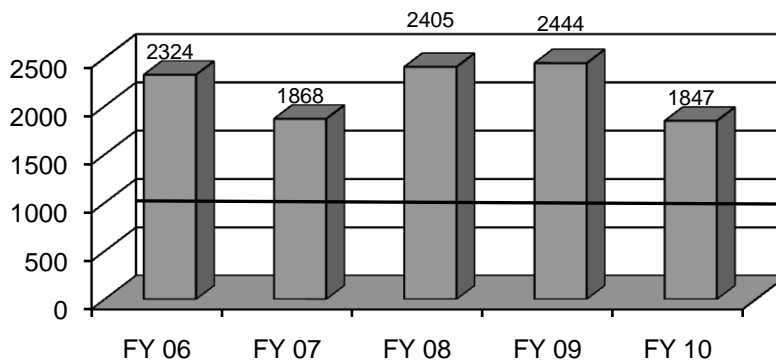
Forensics



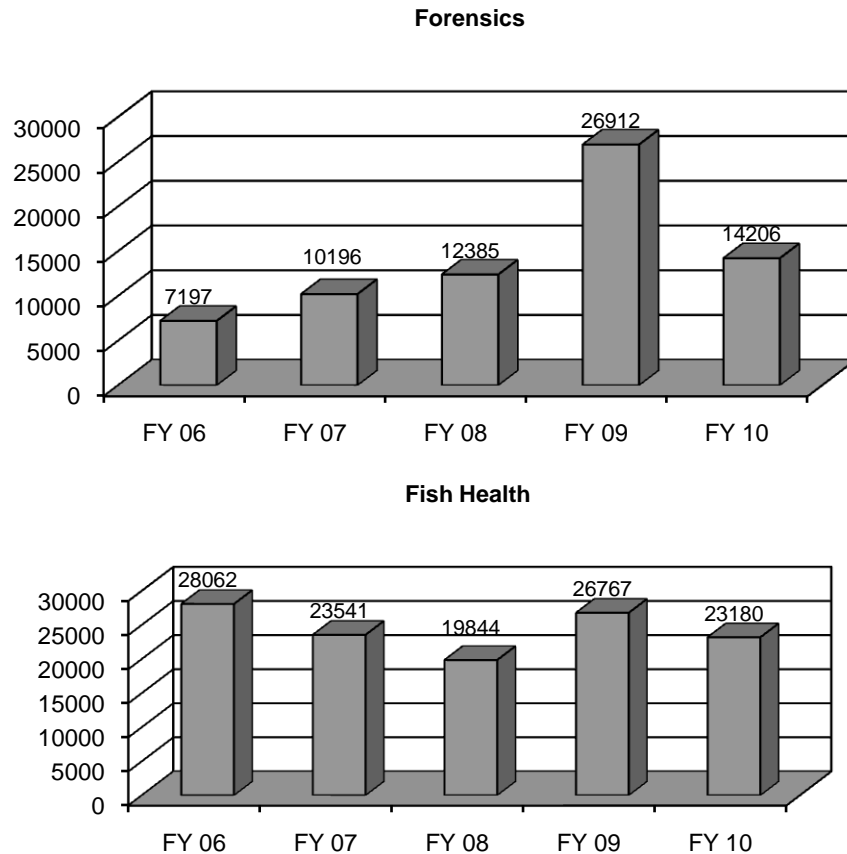
Fish Health



Tooth Aging



Number of tests performed:



Story behind the performance:

The number of samples submitted to the Laboratory is somewhat correlated to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Laboratory. As we increase the number and types of procedures and protocols and as we become more efficient, we can be of service to more and varied personnel/sections in the Department. The exception to this is Fish Hatchery inspections, which are set by regulation and thus have remained relatively constant over the last ten years due to the limited number of water sources in Wyoming.

Law enforcement personnel submit the majority of samples received in the Forensic section. Samples come in the form of evidence, including, but not limited to, antlers, carcasses, hides, horns, clothing, arrows, bows, cans, or knives in a suspected poaching case. For a number of years there was a steady increase in the number of items submitted to the Forensic Section of the Laboratory as more law enforcement personnel became aware of the capabilities of the lab. The exception was FY 08 and FY 10 when submissions actually decreased, resulting in fewer tests performed. The FY 10 numbers are actually an increase over FY 08 but a decrease from FY 09. The numbers in FY 09 were abnormally high. Additional sample submission and tests conducted in this section should indicate an increase in assistance with law enforcement. If more poachers are prosecuted, there will be a greater awareness of the capabilities of the lab by the general public. In this manner, we can assist the resource through deterrence, allowing the resources to be protected for the legitimate hunter.

The majority of fish health samples submitted to the Laboratory comes from inspections conducted by Fish Health Section personnel at state and private hatcheries, as well as fish from feral spawning operations. These samples most often consist of kidney, spleen, ovarian or seminal samples, and fish heads. A number of fish are also submitted for necropsies or diagnostic analysis following die-offs or when fish become sick in a culture situation. The frequency of regulatory fish health inspections is set by Wyoming Game and Fish Commission Chapter 10 regulations and the Fish Health Section of the American Fisheries Society (AFS) sets sample size numbers. The number of hatchery inspections in Wyoming continues to remain relatively constant due the limited availability of water sources for state hatcheries and the restrictive commercial market for private hatcheries.

In most instances, the number of tests conducted is directly correlated to the number of samples received in the Fish Health section. The number of diagnostic cases had a large increase this year to 82 compared to 64 for FY 09 and 65 in FY 08. This is a 28 percent increase from last fiscal year. The number of diagnostic cases will remain high due to hatchery renovations, imposed stocking restrictions resulting from the presence of the whirling disease parasite at several of the hatcheries and due to some hatcheries incrementally increasing their stock densities to compensate for statewide fish production losses. As part of the disease prevention program, Wyoming Game and Fish regulations require that all hatcheries have a certificate of disease free status prior to receiving approval for public or private stocking. This disease prevention program is essential to maintaining healthy fish populations in the state.

It should be noted that numerous tests are performed on each sample in both the Fish Health section and the Forensic section. The number of tests performed, is dependent on the sample type and the requested analysis by the submitting officer or biologist. This flexibility in analysis accounts for the variability in the number of tests performed annually.

The number of samples submitted to the Tooth Aging section of the Laboratory is equal to the number of test performed; therefore, the first figure comprises both statistics. Hunters and Department biologists submit these samples. Only critical herd units/species are still being analyzed in the Laboratory.

The forensic section of the laboratory has been using DNA sequencing on a regular basis in the laboratory which has allowed for species identification of difficult to identify samples or species.

Forensic personnel worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife National Forensic Laboratory to establish the Society for Wildlife Forensic Science. This Society was two years in the making and Wyoming Game and Fish and U.S. Fish and Wildlife co-hosted the inaugural meeting April 2010. There were over 100 participants from 13 states and seven countries in attendance at the meeting. The vision of the Society is: 1) To become the pre-eminent professional organization in the world representing wildlife forensic scientists; 2) To promote the exchange of scientific and technical information; 3) To encourage research in wildlife forensics; and 4) To promote professional competence, uniform qualifications, certification and ethical behavior among wildlife forensic scientists. The Society will assist with certifying its members in court situations and standardizing the wildlife forensic arena. The Laboratory Director is serving as the

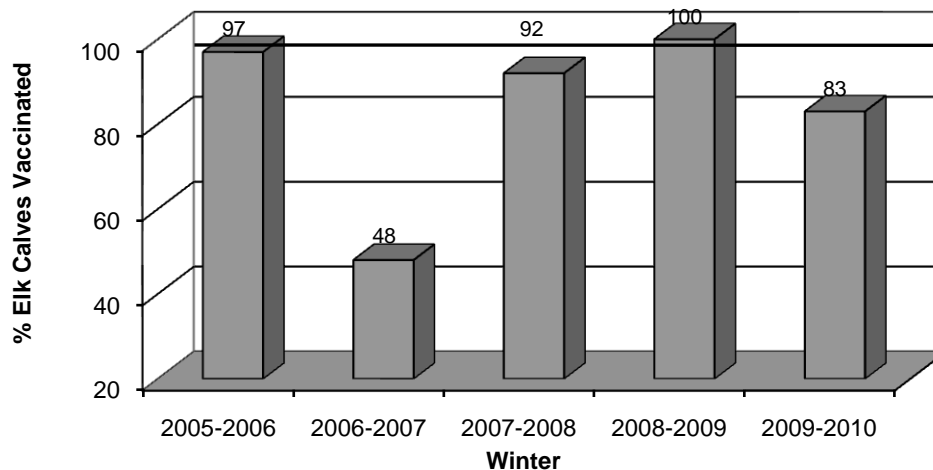
President of the Society for three years and the Forensic Analyst is serving as the Communication Director. The Laboratory Director was certified as Wildlife Forensic expert in Federal court.

The Fish Health Section has spent the last six months of this fiscal year studying the American Fisheries Society Blue Book requirements and bringing the laboratory up to this standard. While this has significantly increased the work load in this section, it will serve to increase the credibility of the laboratory.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- The Laboratory has set up an account/fund with the Wildlife Heritage Foundation called the “Donation Fund for the Advancement of Wildlife Forensics”. Donations will be accepted in law enforcement cases, and outside agencies will be solicited for donations.
- Will continue to work with the University of California at Davis and fish staff on determining the best course of action in regard to the finds of EED virus positive fish in the state hatchery system.
- Continue to work on expanding more open lines of communication between the Laboratory personnel and Wildlife and Fish Division personnel by having annual joint coordination meetings with agency staff. Requests for new technical procedures are continually evaluated and feasibility studies initiated if needed. These new procedures will then be brought on-line in the Laboratory. These changes in procedures often result in expanded use of the Laboratory services by field personnel.
- Continued education of all new fish culture and law enforcement personnel in the Department will result in more knowledge of the laboratory sampling requirements and will improve the quality of sample submission and will facilitate better overall utilization of the capabilities at the laboratory.
- Additional disease confirmation tests will be brought on-line in the Fish Health Section of the Laboratory, following the current guidelines of the American Fisheries Society’s Standards.
- Additional analysis in the area of tooth aging is being pursued.

Performance Measure #2: Percent of elk calves ballistically vaccinated with Strain 19 on 22 of 23 elk feedgrounds in western Wyoming (Personnel in this program will work to vaccinate at least 95 percent of elk calves that use WGFD feedgrounds).



Story behind the performance:

The Brucellosis-Feedground-Habitat (BFH) program was created in 1989 as an integrated approach to control brucellosis in free-ranging elk associated with feedgrounds. This approach combines four ongoing Department programs (feedground vaccination, feedground management, habitat enhancement, and elk/cattle separation) with the ultimate goal of eliminating brucellosis in elk and maintaining spatial and temporal separation of elk and cattle during potential brucellosis transmission periods.

In controlled studies, vaccination with *Brucella abortus* strain 19 was shown to reduce abortion rates in elk. Ballistic strain 19 vaccination in elk was initiated in 1985 at the Greys River Feedground, and was expanded over the next 17 years to 22 of 23 feedgrounds, which include state operated feedgrounds and the National Elk Refuge (NER). Dell Creek feedground elk have never been vaccinated, as this population serves as a control to measure efficacy (via brucellosis seroprevalence) of the strain 19 vaccination program. This performance measure examines vaccination efforts in 22 distinct areas.

During the height of elk feedground attendance each winter (typically early February), elk are classified by age (calves/juveniles, cows, spike bulls, branch-antler bulls). A maximum number of juvenile elk are vaccinated on 22 of 23 feedgrounds annually. Biodegradable bullets composed of hydroxypropylcellulose and calcium carbonate and loaded with lyophilized strain 19 vaccine are ballistically implanted into the large muscle mass of the hindquarter, which dissolve within several hours. The percentages displayed in the graph above are based on the number of calves classified. Approximately 82,170 elk calves have been vaccinated to date.

Vaccination efforts have resulted in over 84 percent calf coverage over the past five years. Some feedgrounds, such as Soda Lake, Bench Corral, and those in the Gros Ventre drainage, have poor elk attendance during light to moderate severity winters due to availability of native foraging opportunities. Elk must be concentrated on feed lines for the vaccination program to be

effective. Thus, recent year's vaccination coverage should be considered the maximum and increased effort will not increase percent of calves vaccinated.

Efforts since winter 2005-2006 have yielded very high percent vaccinations with the exception of the 2006-2007 winter, when feedground attendance was low due to decreased snow coverage and increased forage availability on adjacent winter ranges. Typically, deep snow conditions results in greater tolerance of elk to disturbances associated with the vaccination effort. During winter 2009-2010 winter conditions were moderate, which facilitated 83 percent of all elk calves attending feedgrounds to be vaccinated.

Strain 19 calfhood vaccination was again successful during winter of 2009-2010 with a majority of the feedgrounds actively vaccinating reporting 100 percent calfhood coverage. Several feedgrounds reported over 100 percent coverage, which suggests yearling females were boosted. Very few calves (31 of 180 classified) were vaccinated on the feedgrounds in the Gros Ventre drainage this winter, as feeding operations commenced late in the winter and feedground attendance was sporadic due to mild winter conditions. Vaccination did not occur on the Fall, Scab and Muddy Creek feedgrounds again this winter, to avoid complications with false positive titers during the pilot test and slaughter project being completed at those sites. A total of 2,333 calves (83% of those classified) were vaccinated on 16 feedgrounds during winter 2009-2010.

What we propose to improve performance in the next two years:

- Although winter conditions and availability of native forage affect elk tolerance of the vaccination efforts, and are likely the primary factors influencing this performance measure, BFH personnel will continue to maintain vaccination equipment in proper functioning condition and work closely with feedground personnel to ensure vaccination equipment is delivered promptly when conditions are most conducive for vaccination.

Data development agenda:

The percent of elk calves vaccinated for those classified on feedgrounds is important information to document the success of the strain 19 vaccination program delivery method. However, the successful delivery of the vaccine does not ensure the program is efficacious in reducing the occurrence of brucellosis in elk, specifically brucellosis transmission among elk and from elk to cattle. Current research using vaginal implant transmitters has been expanded to vaccinated and non-vaccinated feedgrounds to better determine abortion prevention rates afforded by strain 19 in marked elk.